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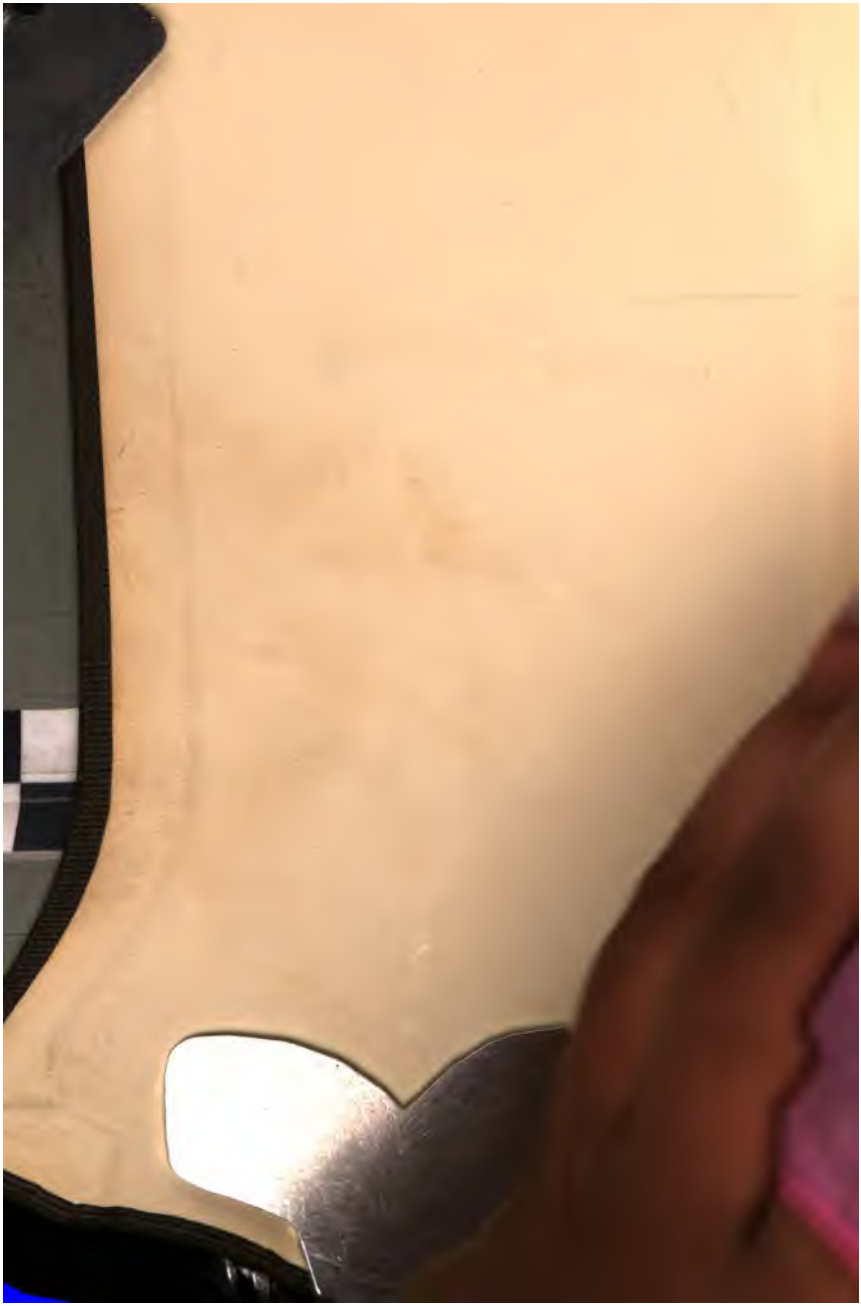

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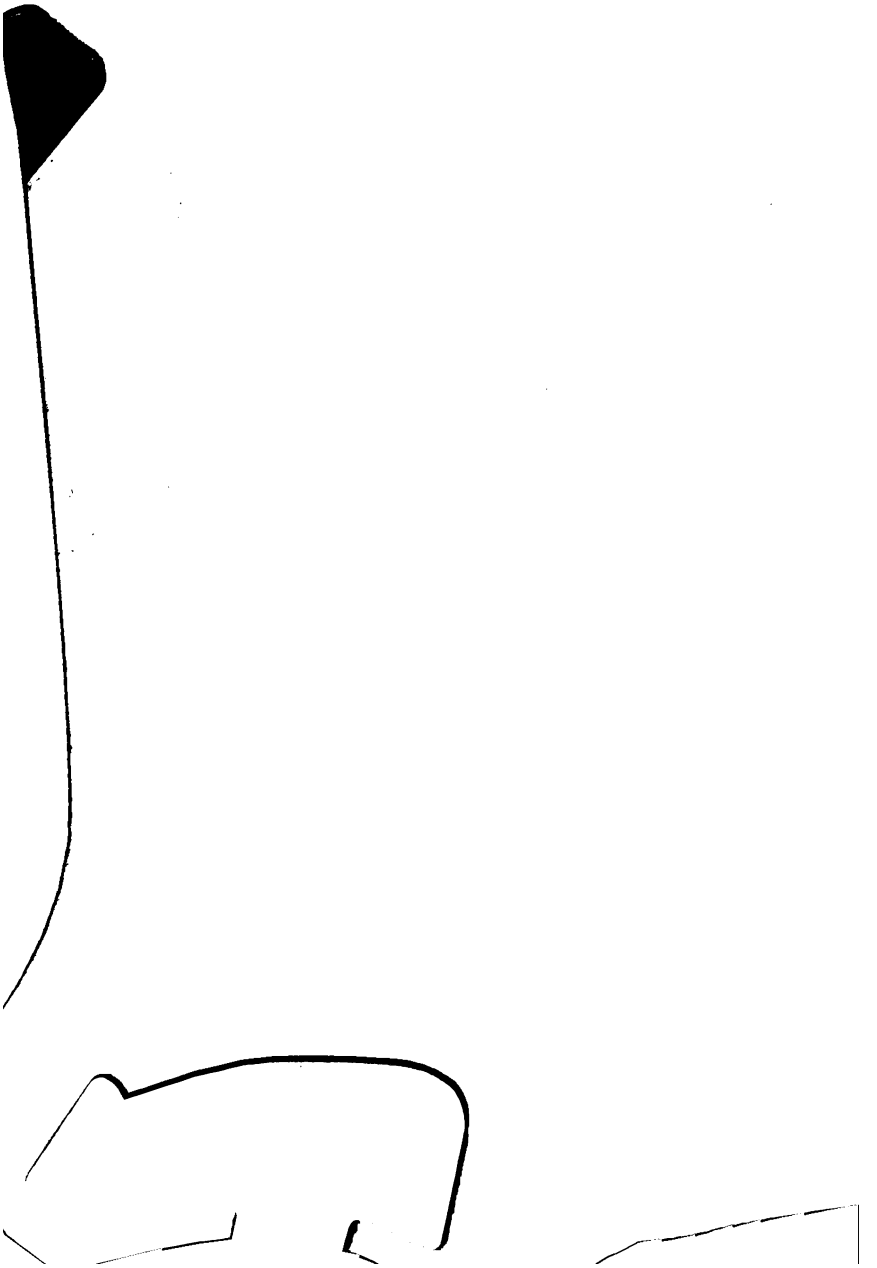

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MOLIÈRE

LES FEMMES SAVANTES
(FEMALE PEDANTS)

LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE
(THE IMAGINARY SICK MAN)

MOLIÈRE

TRANSLATED BY

KATHARINE PRESCOTT WORMELEY

VOL. III.

LES FEMMES SAVANTES
LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE

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INTRODUCTION[1]

IT is difficult to believe that two hundred and eighty years ago, at the death of Henri IV. in 1610, France had, comparatively speaking, no written language, no diffused intellectual knowledge, little refinement of habits and manners, and scarcely any domestic and social life. A study of the French language in its course from Celtic to Latin, classic and popular, then to popular Latin exclusively (the parent of French, Spanish, and Italian, Portuguese and Wallachian, otherwise called the Romance languages), with admixture — after the invasion of the bar-

[1] The following sketch of the Hôtel de Rambouillet is taken almost wholly from: "Précieux et Précieuses," par Charles L. Livet; "La Société Française au XVII^e^ Siècle," par Victor Cousin; "Histoire de la langue Française," par Auguste Brachet, lauréat de l'Institut de France.

barians — of Frank and Gothic words, would well repay the effort of making it.

In the ninth century the vulgar tongue of France superseded Latin, which the body of the people no longer understood, and a poem in the French language appeared. During the ninth and tenth centuries French national life came into being, with its language, poetry, and art; and in the eleventh and twelfth a thoroughly original poetic literature, of brilliant lyrics and noble song, like the "Chanson de Roland," was popular. From the thirteenth century onward, the French language was accepted and used by foreign nations: the Norman Conquest introduced it into England: in Germany, Frederick II. and his court both spoke and wrote it; in Italy, Marco Polo wrote his travels in it; Brunetto Latini, Dante's master, composed his "Trésor de Sapience" in French "because," as he said, "it is the most delectable and usual tongue." But in the fourteenth century this feudal language, Old French (never uniform, but composed of several, chiefly four, distinct dialects),[1] began to change with the times, and to supply the needs

[1] A *dialect* is a recognized form of language: a *patois* is a spoken idiom, not recognized as a form of language.

of a new form of society, as the analytical or modern spirit gained ground; so that the fifteenth century saw the birth of what may be called a new language, namely, modern French. The troubles and fall of the House of Valois, the Renaissance, and the Reformation, produced still other social changes, to which the language adapted itself with ease and precision. The French of Calvin's "Institution de la religion Chrétienne" (1535) is ripe and full, and expresses with facility all shades of meaning.

Had the language remained what it then was, the criticism of Malherbe and the seventeenth-century savants would never have been needed. But it now became corrupted by an extraordinary influx of foreign words, borrowed from the Latin, Greek, and Italian. The splendor of the Italian Renaissance in literature and art dazzled the French mind, and the regency of Catherine de' Medici gave the prestige of fashion to the polished manners and language of her native land. Italian terms of war, of customs, and court life, of art, and even of commercial relations were transferred to the French language. To this corrupting influence must be added another, — the mania for antiquity. So

that the homely French tongue began to be despised, and efforts were made to "ennoble it" (such was the term used) by introducing the literary forms of the classic authors. So strong was this mania that for nearly two centuries France regarded the classical forms of narrative and poetry as the only legitimate ones in point of good taste and capability of noble inspiration. Ronsard dragged literature into a system of imitation which was almost fatal to the national character. Under Henri IV. still another mania attacked the language; it was "Spaniardized." Malherbe was the first to make an effort to restore its purity. He appealed from Latin and Greek to the speech of the people themselves. "If any one," he said, "asks my opinion on French words, I send them to the porters in the Port au Foin, who alone are my instructors in our native language."

But, as all language is only the expression of the manners, customs, and morals of a period — for language is, above all things, the product of environment — we must look at the state of France in the latter part of the sixteenth century, and the beginning of the seventeenth, if we wish to understand the condition of the French language of that period.

The polite manners and personal refinement introduced from Italy by Catherine de' Medici had died out. The upper clergy were for the most part young nobles, living away from their dioceses, dissipating their youth and the wealth of their abbeys in worldly pleasures, and wholly ignorant of the duties of their office. The nobility, who were the sole arbiters of manners, morals, and language, were soldiers trained to war and the habits of a garrison life. They came from all parts of the kingdom and spoke the various dialects of their own districts. There was no standard of national language. Spoken language bore no resemblance to written language; and the latter was chiefly a learned jargon disconnected with daily intercourse. The French language, acquired without rules and without grammar, followed no law but that of custom, and was used with little delicacy or decency of expression. Manners and language, either spoken or written, were alike corrupt.

Such being the condition of society in France at the beginning of the seventeenth century, it is obvious that the influence of women could alone lead to greater delicacy of manners and a purer language. In order to apply this influence, the

first work of women was, necessarily, to reform themselves, — to command respect by greater purity of life; to make their company more difficult of access, while at the same time they made it more desirable by the charm of conversation (a thing as yet unknown) and the refinement of their own habits and tastes. The woman who was destined to lead the way in this reform, naturally, spontaneously, not from *parti pris*, nor with flourish of culture, — as we might do in our day, — was Catherine de Vivonne, daughter of the Marchese di Pisani and a descendant of the Savelli; who was born in Rome in 1588, brought up in Italy by a careful mother, and married, when only twelve years of age, to the Vidame de Mans, afterwards Marquis de Rambouillet, with whom she lived for fifty-two years a life of unbroken confidence and love.

As early as 1608, when twenty years of age, Madame de Rambouillet resigned a distinguished position at the court of France and in society to devote herself wholly to her family; while at the same time she applied her mind to study, and to the cultivation and ripening of her taste by intercourse with men of choice minds, whom her own merits attracted to her home in the rue

Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre. Such was the beginning of the first and most famous of French salons, — that of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, where the art of conversation was born, where women devoted themselves to the *pleasures* of the intellect, alluring men, with gay lightheartedness and without assumption, to follow their lead. This absence of assumption was in fact the charm of the Hôtel de Rambouillet; pretence and pedantry were banished; all its frequenters were at their ease; persons of intellect were received on equal terms without regard to their condition in life. Great lords learned to respect writers; while women held an ascendency over all which powerfully contributed to refine and polish both writers and warriors. Literature and the possibilities of the French language were the chief topics of conversation, though not the only ones; all things were discussed, — war, religion, politics. Men of letters were sought and honored, but they did not rule the salon; which was, in truth, a general meeting-ground, where all had equal rights and no clique governed. This is why the Hôtel de Rambouillet exercised so wide and general an influence on the public taste of the day, — it was never narrowed to a single circle. Supreme

distinction and breadth of thought, ease and familiarity of manners which were always refined, and the art of saying simply the noblest things, — these were the leading characteristics of Madame de Rambouillet and her society.

No more delightful reading can be found than the history of this social reform, given in many memoirs, letters, and "historiettes," but more especially in the pages of Victor Cousin, — "Madame de Longueville's lover." The Marquise de Rambouillet herself must have been a woman of rare nature and character, to have won the suffrages of all who came in contact with her, no matter what their opinions, interests, rank, or character might be. "A woman living beside her husband, loving the joys of home, surrounded by a numerous family, valiantly enduring unnumbered trials, while with indomitable courage she hid her sufferings from her friends. Hers was an exquisite nature, sensitive to shocks of all kinds, whether of speech, or sentiment, or habits of life; exacting in the choice of friends; sincere, faithful, and indulgent to those she selected; so beautiful that she commanded love; so dignified that she silenced it; so pure that she never suspected the passions she inspired; so kind that to her it was

given to do good and meet with no ingratitude. A noble and saintly woman, whose glance, like the coal of the prophet, purified the hearts and lips about her; whose life no breath of slander or of blame ever dared approach;"[1] for even Tallemant des Reaux, caricaturist and back-biter *par excellence* of the seventeenth century, not only spares her, but praises her with an almost touching effusion, as coming from his pen.

We have little space to say more of this delightful coterie. The French Academy seems to have had its second home in the Hôtel de Rambouillet; in fact, the project of the Immortals was mooted there before Richelieu gave it a legal existence in 1635. If not actually born in Madame de Rambouillet's salon it was certainly nurtured there; and the plan of the "Dictionnaire de l'Académie" (first published in 1694 and which from that date has been the standard of the French language) was discussed in detail in the famous blue chamber. Among the writers whom we find habitually present were Malherbe, poet, philosopher, and the earliest reformer of the French language; Racan, his pupil (who wrote his life), and Chapelain, poet and oracle of literature during the reign of

[1] Charles L Livet.

Louis XIV, — all three of whom were among the first members of the French Academy; also Balzac, creator of French prose, a man of exquisite taste, and long the nearest friend of Madame de Rambouillet; Voiture, wit and man of letters, oracle of society, and one of the first academicians; Ménage, philologist and critic; La Rochefoucauld, Corneille, Bossuet, Cospeau, bishop of Nantes, Godeau, bishop of Vence, Conrart, first secretary of the Academy, and many others. Among statesmen and warriors we find, preeminently, the Prince de Condé, Cardinal Richelieu, Gaston, Duc d'Orléans, the Prince de Ligne, Arnauld de Corbeville, the hero of Dunkerque, the Maréchal de Grammont, the Maréchal de Montmorency, the Marquis de Montausier, said to be the original of Molière's "Alceste," and the husband of Julie d'Angennes, with many others. Among the women, first after Madame de Rambouillet stands Julie d'Angennes, her dear and precious daughter, afterwards Marquise and Duchesse de Montausier, the type and spirit of this rare society; next, Madame de Sablé, the special friend of Madame de Rambouillet, Angélique Paulet, Mademoiselle de Bourbon, Condé's sister (afterwards Madame de Longueville, Julie d'Angennes' ardent friend),

and her mother, Charlotte de Montmorency, Princesse de Condé, Madame de la Fayette, Madame de Sevigné, and Mademoiselle de Scudéry, who may be called the historian of the coterie, for "Le Grand Cyrus" is, under a thin Persian veil, the portrait gallery of all these choice persons.

For nearly forty years this delightful society congregated around Madame de Rambouillet and her charming daughter, Julie, in the famous blue chamber. In those days salons, "sitting-rooms," did not exist. Vast reception-halls, such as we still see in the old palaces, halls where half a regiment could be quartered, as in the Château de Blois, were all that corresponded to the name. Domestic architecture was unknown. Social life was carried on in bedrooms, which were dark and so ill-furnished that if the ladies had chairs the gallants often sat upon the floor; moreover, no color but tan or dingy red had ever enlivened them. Madame de Rambouillet was the first to call into being domestic architecture. She changed the whole internal construction of private dwellings; decorated her own room in pale-blue and gold; cut windows of large size to the ground, in order to give light and air, bringing about in this respect almost as

great a reformation as in refinement of manners, occupation of mind, development of taste, and purity of language.

As years went by and trials accumulated upon this wise and dear woman the social glory of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, having done its great work, waned. Imitators, especially among the upper bourgeoisie, caricatured it; "culture" and "the higher style" were turned into absurdity. Even Mademoiselle de Scudéry degenerated in tone, and in her novel "Clélie," which followed "Le Grand Cyrus," laid herself open to Molière's satire in "Les Précieuses Ridicules" by the cloying sentimentality of her language and the absurdities of the "Carte du Tendre," which (and this ought to be remembered in her defence) was a piece of impromptu private nonsense, written to make amusement among her friends, who unwisely persuaded her to put it into her book. Mademoiselle de Scudéry was not, either personally or socially, allied to the follies of "Les Précieuses Ridicules," but she heedlessly gave a cue in "Clélie" which was seized by the spurious imitators of the noble coterie.

"It has been amply shown in these days that Molière never thought of attacking the Hôtel de

Rambouillet, either in his farce of 'Les Précieuses Ridicules' or in his higher comedy of 'Les Femmes Savantes.' The Marquise de Rambouillet lived to the close of the year 1665, surrounded by affection and universal veneration; Julie d'Angennes was Duchesse de Montausier and *gouvernante* of the king's children; Montausier himself, the dauphin's governor, was held to be a model of antique virtue; the Prince de Condé, one of Molière's greatest admirers and protectors, together with his sister Madame de Longueville, Madame de Sablé, Madame de Sévigné, Bossuet, etc., were still living to guard the memory of the illustrious house which had witnessed their brilliant youth. The quality that predominated in the blue chamber of the rue Saint-Thomas-du-Louvre, as in other noble societies which were formed on its model, was an ease of intelligent intercourse that was full of charm; for simplicity is the companion of true aristocracy, whether of birth or mind. No doubt there may have been, at times, a little overstrained delicacy and refinement; but the mere shadow of ridicule never reached it, and in 1673 Molière would have revolted his audiences had they even suspected that in 'Les Femmes Savantes' he meant to attack persons so re-

spected and whose reforms had been so useful to the habits and the language of France.

"Molière's object in 'Les Femmes Savantes' is to laugh at female pedantry. But it would be a great mistake to think that Chrysale is meant to be the wise man of the play; far from it. Chrysale, in his legitimate wrath, enunciates somewhat the same theory about women that Sganarelle gives us in 'L'École des Maris' and Arnolphe in 'L'École des Femmes.' Now Molière satirizes both Sganarelle and Arnolphe, and, consequently, Chrysale as well as Philaminte, Bélise, and Armande. It is always excess, affectation, the travesty of a real thing which he pursues, whether it be in women who, affecting culture and *bel esprit*, fall into pedantry, or in men whose coarseness and selfishness endeavor to deprive woman of her noble rank as the companion of man, created like him for knowledge and love; men who attempt to reduce her to the level of a slave, an inferior being, whose soul and mind are not worthy of cultivation."[1]

No, it is not Chrysale in "Les Femmes Savantes" who represents Molière's own opinion as to woman, but Clitandre. Molière is ever for that *juste milieu* so admirably described by

[1] Victor Cousin.

Mademoiselle de Scudéry in one of those delightful (though rather long-winded) conversations reported in the tenth volume of "Le Grand Cyrus."

"I leave you to judge," continued Sappho (Mademoiselle de Scudéry herself), "whether I am wrong in wishing that women should know how to read, and read with application. There are some women of great natural parts who never read anything; and what seems to me the strangest thing of all is that those intelligent women prefer to be horribly bored when alone, rather than accustom themselves to read, and so gather company in their minds by choosing such books, either grave or gay, as suit their inclinations. It is certain that reading enlightens the mind so clearly and forms the judgment so well that without it conversation can never be as apt or as thorough as it might be. . . . What I should principally like to teach women is not to talk too much about the things they know well, and not to talk at all about the things of which they know nothing. I want them to be neither learned nor ignorant, but to employ a little better the advantages which nature has given them. I want them to adorn their minds as well as their persons. This is

not incompatible with their lives; there are many agreeable forms of knowledge which women may acquire thoroughly without departing from the modesty of their sex, provided they make good use of them. And I therefore wish with all my heart that women's minds were less idle than they are, and that I myself might profit by the advice I give to others."

Let us remember that these words were said by a woman in the dawn of "culture." How far have the majority of women in the nineteenth century advanced upon the necessity of such advice?

It must be frankly admitted (as we have already said) that after the decline of the Rambouillet coterie even Mademoiselle de Scudéry opened the way to deplorable imitations, especially among the upper bourgeoisie; and it was these imitations, prevalent at the time when Molière wrote his plays, which gave the cue to "Les Précieuses Ridicules" and "Les Femmes Savantes."

"Such is the real truth of this much discussed matter. It was not at the Hôtel de Rambouillet, nor at Mademoiselle de Scudéry, simple, unaffected and judicious in her true nature, that Molière's sarcasms were directed. It is certain

that without the Hôtel de Rambouillet and Mademoiselle de Scudéry, the style entitled *précieux* would never have been held in such high honor; there would not have sprung up, from one end of France to the other, that crowd of coteries, high and low, whose influence, be it remembered, permeated all ranks of French life, even the most commonplace, with a desire for the things of intellect; though, at the same time, by their affectations and exaggerations, they called forth the reproval of common-sense, and the sarcasms of the great comic writer. We must pay for our blessings. Bad imitations can never degrade, except to vulgar eyes, their patterns of excellence. Let us leave les précieuses *ridicules* to the shafts of wit that fairly struck them, but let us honor with Molière (see his preface to 'Les Précieuses') the lovable and distinguished women who preferred intelligent and virtuous enjoyments to worldly pleasures; who held, as we may say, a school of polite manners, and who spread about them a taste for the good and for the beautiful. So long as this taste is not lost to France, the name of the Marquise de Rambouillet will never be pronounced without respect; and Mademoiselle de Scudéry will have her just share of public

esteem for the happy influence she long exerted through the eminent qualities of her heart and the rare distinction of her mind." [1]

This comedy of "Les Femmes Savantes," which Voltaire and the majority of commentators rank with "Le Misanthrope" and "Tartuffe," was first acted at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal, March 11, 1672.

"Le Malade Imaginaire" was the last play written by Molière, and he died while acting it for the fourth time, February 10, 1673. As he uttered the word "Juro!" in the last scene a convulsion seized him, which he managed to conceal until the curtain fell at the close of the play; after which he was carried to his home, where he died in an hour from a ruptured blood-vessel.

The play was written to celebrate the return of Louis XIV. from his first campaign in Holland, but, for some reason unknown, it was not acted before the court. "Le Malade Imaginaire" has been called a farce, but it is rather a comedy, dealing with two passions eternal in the human breast, — the love of life and the fear of death, — while it twits and ridicules the

[1] Victor Cousin.

writer's favorite butt, the leech of the period. It does not appear, however, that Molière's sarcasms lessened the reputation of the doctors of the court. Louis XIV.'s weekly "medicine days" were solemn occasions, observed with the strictest etiquette; and the schools of medicine continued to put forth doctrines very much like those of Diafoirus, and Thomas, his son. Georges Backer, who published an edition of Molière's works at Brussels in 1694, declares in his preface that the Faculty made strong appeals to Louis XIV. after Molière's death not to allow the publication of the play. Possibly it was some such opposition, together with the king's habits of *doctoring*, which prevented its presentation before the court.

LES FEMMES SAVANTES

(FEMALE PEDANTS)

Comedy

IN FIVE ACTS

PERSONAGES

CHRYSALE . . . *A Worthy Burgher.*
PHILAMINTE . . . *Wife to Chrysale.*
ARMANDE } . . *Daughters of Chrysale*
HENRIETTE } . . *and Philaminte.*
ARISTE . . . . *Chrysale's Brother.*
BÉLISE . . . . *Chrysale's Sister.*
CLITANDRE . . . *Lover of Henriette.*
TRISSOTIN . . . *A Wit of the Day.*
VADIUS . . . . *A Learned Man.*
MARTINE . . . . *Kitchen Maid.*
JULIEN . . . . *Valet to Vadius.*
A NOTARY.

The scene is in Paris, in Chrysale's house.

LES FEMMES SAVANTES

Act First

SCENE FIRST

ARMANDE, HENRIETTE

ARMANDE.

WHAT! sister, is the noble name of daughter a title whose charming sweetness you are willing to resign? Do you dare take pleasure in the thought of marriage? Is that vulgar project really in your head?

HENRIETTE.

Yes, my dear Armande.

ARMANDE.

Ah, how shall I bear that yes? I cannot hear it without nausea.

HENRIETTE.

What is there in marriage to offend you?

ARMANDE.

Oh, heavens! fy!

HENRIETTE.

Why so?

ARMANDE.

Fy, fy, I tell you! Can you not conceive how the mere hearing of the word may be disgusting to the mind? With what strange images it wounds the soul, and drags our thoughts o'er loathsome things. Do you not shudder as you hear the word? How can you, sister, force your heart to meet its consequences?

HENRIETTE.

Those consequences, as I look upon them, show me a husband, household, children; I see nothing there, if I know how to reason, to wound my soul or make me shudder.

ARMANDE.

Good heavens! can such bonds please you?

HENRIETTE.

Pray, at our age what better can we do than bind to us by the name of husband a man we love, and who loves us, and make that union of unbroken tenderness a source of joy for all our lives? Has such a bond, if wisely chosen, no attractions

ARMANDE.

Alas! how low a pitch your mind has reached! and what a paltry part you 'll play in life! cooped up at home on household cares intent! knowing no loftier pleasure than making idols of a man and babes! Leave to coarse men and common women the low amusements of such empty things; to higher objects lift your mind. Seek to acquire a taste for nobler pleasures, and show contempt for things of sense; give yourself wholly up to things of mind, and look to the example of our mother, honored on all sides with the title "learned." Strive, as I strive, to prove yourself her daughter; aspire to the learning already in our family, and train yourself to seek the joys that love of knowledge sheds on every heart. Rather than be the bounden slave to the rule of any man, marry yourself, my sister, to philosophy, — philosophy,

which lifts us high above our fellows of the human race; giving to intellect a sovereign empire, subjecting to its laws the animal within our nature, whose instincts level us to the grade of brutes. Those are the noble joys, the sweet attachments which ought to fill each moment of our lives; and all these household cares to which I see so many women of sense devoted seem to me most puerile.

Henriette.

But Heaven, whose laws we know to be all-powerful, formed us at birth for different vocations. All minds are not of the same stuff, cut out to make philosophers. If yours was born to rise to heights where learned men have carried theory, mine, sister, is made to plod along, confined to petty cares by lowliness. Why thwart the laws of heaven? Rather, let us follow, each, the lead of our own instincts; you, by the impulse of a grand and noble genius, into the higher regions of philosophy; while my soul, keeping here below, will taste and share the earthly joys of marriage. Thus, separate in our aims and our desires, we still shall imitate our mother, — you, in respect of soul and noble aspirations, I, on the side of sense and

common pleasures; you, in producing things of light and mind, I, in producing those of matter.

ARMANDE.

But those who follow the example of another should seek to do so on the nobler side; it is no way, my dear, to cough and spit as they do.

HENRIETTE.

But you would not be all you boast of being, if our mother had had no other nature than that of soul. 'T is lucky for you her noble spirit was not in those days given to philosophy. Grant me, for pity's sake, a little of the baseness to which you owe your being; pray don't suppress, by making me a convert, some other little intellect desirous to be born.

ARMANDE.

I see your mind cannot be cured of its obstinate folly in desiring a husband. But tell me who it is you think of taking? 'T is surely not Clitandre you have your eye upon?

HENRIETTE.

And pray, why not Clitandre? Is he so wanting in merit? do you think the choice I make too low?

ARMANDE.

No; but nothing is more dishonorable than to take away the conquests of another. It is a fact, not, I believe, unknown to the world, that Clitandre has long sighed for me.

HENRIETTE.

True; but his sighs were vain. You would not stoop to human baseness; your soul renounces marriage, and all your love is given to philosophy. Therefore, as you have no designs on Clitandre's heart what matters it to you if others choose him?

ARMANDE.

The stern control in which our reason holds our senses does not deprive us of the sweets of flattery; we may refuse a husband while we welcome an adorer in our train.

HENRIETTE.

Well, I have not prevented Clitandre from continuing to adore you. I have but taken, when you rejected it, the homage which his heart then turned to me.

ARMANDE.

But, do you think the homage of a thwarted lover is safe to trust? Think you his passion for your eyes is so confirmed that in his heart all love for me is dead?

HENRIETTE.

He told me so, and — I believe him.

ARMANDE.

My dear, don't put such faith in men; be sure that when he vows he quits me and loves you, he knows not what he says, and is deceived himself.

HENRIETTE.

I cannot judge; but, if you choose, 't is easy to obtain the truth. I see him coming; he shall be asked to put this matter in the clearest light.

SCENE SECOND

CLITANDRE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE

HENRIETTE.

To clear a doubt my sister casts into my mind, Clitandre, explain your heart, unveil its depths, and deign to let us know which of us two may claim your love.

ARMANDE.

No, no! I do not wish to force your passion to that harsh extreme. I know how such compelled avowals embarrass men, and therefore I would spare you.

CLITANDRE.

Madame, my heart, which knows no insincerity, feels no constraint in making its avowal; the step will cause me no embarrassment. I here declare with honest soul, explicitly, that the soft ties which bind me, my love and all its hopes, are here (*motioning to Henriette*). Let this avowal cause you no emotion; you chose yourself to bring the thing about. Your charms attracted me; my tender sighs showed you the ardor of my wishes; on you my heart bestowed a love that might have been immortal. But your eyes were not content with such a conquest; I suffered many shames beneath their yoke; they ruled my soul like splendid tyrants, until, at last, weary of pain, I turned to find a gentler mistress and less cruel chains (*motioning to Henriette*). Madame, I found them here in these dear eyes whose glance will ever be most precious to me. With pitying looks they stilled my pain, disdaining not

the heart your charms rejected. Such rare goodness touched me so deeply that nought can rend me from its fetters. Therefore I pray you, madame, make no vain effort to oppose my love, or to recall a heart resolved to die in this sweet fervor.

ARMANDE.

And pray, who told you I desired to do so, or that such deep concern was felt about you? I think you silly to imagine it, and most impertinent to tell me so.

HENRIETTE.

Oh! gently, sister. Is this the mental power which rules so well our lower nature and puts a curb on anger?

ARMANDE.

But you, who talk to me, how do you practice what you preach? By yielding to a love displayed for you without the sanction of your parents! Remember that your duty subjects you to their will; you are not free except by their permission. They have supreme authority upon your heart, and it is criminal in you to give it as you please.

HENRIETTE.

I thank you for your kindness in warning me so plainly of my duty. My heart shall regulate its conduct on your precepts; and — to show you, sister, that I profit by them — I beg you, Clitandre, to protect your love by seeking the approval of my parents. Obtain from them the legitimate right to love me, and thus enable me to return your love without wrong-doing.

CLITANDRE.

I will at once use every care to do this openly. I have waited only to obtain from you this sweet consent.

ARMANDE.

You triumph, sister; and you seem to think that this annoys me.

HENRIETTE.

I? not at all. I know that reason's power is ever potent on your senses, and through the lessons that true wisdom teaches, you are above such petty foibles. Far from thinking you annoyed, I think that you will now consent to aid me. Second Clitandre's request, and by your urgency help on the happy moment of our marriage. I beg this of you, and to do my part —

ARMANDE.

Your petty spirit loves to tease. I see how proud you are to catch a heart thus flung to you.

HENRIETTE.

Flung as it is, that heart does not displease you, and if your eyes could pluck it from me they would not be averse from doing so.

ARMANDE.

I cannot condescend to answer; such foolish talk should not be minded.

HENRIETTE.

You are right; you show a moderation greater than might have been expected.

[*Exit Armande.*

SCENE THIRD

CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE

HENRIETTE.

Your sincere avowal does not surprise me.

CLITANDRE.

My love demands such frankness; the heights to which its proud hopes reach require, at the least, sincerity. But, since you grant me this permission, I go at once to see your father.

HENRIETTE.

'T were safer to win my mother. My father has an easy-going temper that consents to all, but there is little weight to what he promises. Heaven granted him a kindliness of heart which subdues him instantly to what my mother wills. 'T is she who governs, laying down the law in autocratic tones. I fain would have you show a little more compliance to her, and to my aunt. Such a spirit, by flattering their fancies, might draw the warmth of their regard upon you.

CLITANDRE.

My soul can never, being born sincere, flatter the character of others, not even your sister's; and I frankly say that female pedants are not to my taste. I agree that a woman should be enlightened in all things; but I do not like her to have an offensive desire to make herself learned merely to seem learned. I wish that sometimes she would even pretend ignorance of the things she knows. I like her to hide her studies and have knowledge without wishing every one to know of it; to refrain, in short, from citing authors, using fine language, and nailing pedantry to every word. I respect your mother greatly, but I cannot like her

hobby or make myself the echo of the things she says, or swing my incense to her favorite wit. Her Monsieur Trissotin annoys and bores me. I am provoked to see how she esteems that man. She ranks him with the highest, noblest spirits, — a fool, whose writings everybody hisses, a pedant, whose prolific pen supplies the market with waste-paper.

HENRIETTE.

His writings and his talk are, as you say, most wearisome, and I agree with you in taste and judgment; but as he has so great a power over my mother, you ought to force yourself to some compliance. A lover pays his court where his heart clings; he needs the favor and good-will of all, and to have none to thwart his love he even strives to please the watch-dog.

CLITANDRE.

Yes, that is true; but Monsieur Trissotin inspires me, to the depths of my soul, with overpowering dislike. I cannot consent to win his suffrage by lowering myself to praise his works. It was through them I knew him first before I met him. I saw, in the balderdash he gives the world, all that I find displayed in his

pedantic person, — the height of his presumption, his arrogant opinion of his worth, his indolent self-confidence, which makes him so contented with himself that he is ever grinning at his own deserts, and thinks so highly of the stuff he writes he would not change his fancied fame for all the honors of the greatest general.

HENRIETTE.

You have good eyes to see all that!

CLITANDRE.

'T is written on his very face. I knew, from the verses which he tosses at our head, the style of man the poet was; in fact, I guessed his features so correctly that one day, meeting a stranger in the Gallery, I wagered it was Trissotin in person, and won the wager!

HENRIETTE.

Oh, what a tale!

CLITANDRE.

No, I tell it as it happened. But I see your aunt. Permit me, I entreat you, to declare to her the secret of my heart, and ask her favorable assistance with your mother.

[*Exit Henriette.*

SCENE FOURTH

BÉLISE, CLITANDRE.

CLITANDRE.

Madame, will you allow a lover to take advantage of this fortunate moment and reveal to you his honest love?

BÉLISE.

Ah! gently, gently; be careful not to tell me openly your thoughts. If I consent to place you among my lovers, your eyes must be your sole interpreters; do not explain to me in language desires which, to me, must seem an outrage. Love me, desire me, sigh for my charms, but never, never let me know it. To hidden love my eyes may still be closed, so long as you content yourself with mute interpretations; but if your lips insist on taking part, then from from my sight I must forever banish you.

CLITANDRE.

Fear nothing from this project of my heart. Its object, madame, is your niece, who charms me; and I have come to earnestly implore your kindness in seconding the love I feel for Henriette.

BÉLISE.

Ah, I must admit you turn it cleverly! that subtle subterfuge deserves all praise. Never, in all the novels I have read, did I find anything more dexterous.

CLITANDRE.

But this is not a stroke of wit, madame. It is a plain avowal of what is in my soul. Heaven, by unalterable ties of love, has bound my heart to Henriette's beauties. She holds me in her gentle sway. Marriage with Henriette is the blessing for which I long; and you can further it. All I ask is that you will deign to countenance my suit.

BÉLISE.

I see your tender drift and I know all you wish me to understand beneath that name. The device is shrewd; and, to maintain it, I will say — so far as my heart can make you any answer — that *Henriette* is averse to marriage; therefore, without pretending to any hope, you must continue to aspire to her.

CLITANDRE.

Ah, madame! what is the good of making such a difficulty? Why will you think a thing which is not so?

BÉLISE.

Be less punctilious, I entreat you. Cease to deny that which your eyes have often told me. It is enough that you have cleverly devised a plan to mask your love, behind it one may well submit to accept your homage, provided that its transports, by honor guarded, will offer pure vows only at my shrine.

CLITANDRE.

But —

BÉLISE.

Adieu, this must suffice you now; in fact I have said more than I intended.

CLITANDRE.

But your mistake —

BÉLISE.

Say no more. I blush already; my modesty has made a mighty effort.

CLITANDRE.

But I 'll be hanged if I am courting you, and —

BÉLISE.

No, no! I will not hear another word.

[*Exit.*

SCENE FIFTH

CLITANDRE, *alone.*

The devil take that fool and all her fancies! Who ever saw the like of her conceit? Well, I must look to others for the help I need, and seek the counsel of a man of sense.

END OF ACT FIRST.

Act Second

SCENE FIRST

ARISTE, *leaving Clitandre and speaking back to him.*

YES, I will bring you an answer as soon as possible. I shall promote, and urge, and do all that is necessary — How many things a lover has to say that might be put into a word! how impatiently he wants that which he desires! Never —

SCENE SECOND

CHRYSALE, ARISTE

ARISTE.

Ah! God bless you, brother.

CHRYSALE.

And you too, Ariste.

ARISTE.

Do you know what brings me here?

CHRYSALE.

No; but, if you like, I am ready to hear it.

ARISTE.

You have known Clitandre for some time past, I think?

CHRYSALE.

I have; I see him often at my house.

ARISTE.

And what opinion have you formed of him?

CHRYSALE.

I think him a man of honor, of mind, and heart, and rectitude. I see few men as worthy.

ARISTE.

A certain desire of his has brought me here, and I rejoice to find you think so well of him.

CHRYSALE.

I knew his father on my trip to Rome.

ARISTE.

So much the better.

CHRYSALE.

He was a thorough gentleman.

ARISTE.

So they say.

CHRYSALE.

In those days we were twenty-eight years old, and dashing fellows, I can tell you.

ARISTE.

I believe it.

CHRYSALE.

We went about among the Roman ladies, and everybody over there talked of our gallantries. Ha! we made jealousies!

ARISTE.

And no wonder, too! But, to return to the subject which brings me here to-day.

SCENE THIRD

BÉLISE, *entering softly and listening*, CHRYSALE, ARISTE

ARISTE.

Clitandre has sent me as a mediator. His heart is captured by the charms of Henriette.

CHRYSALE.

What! my daughter Henriette?

ARISTE.

Yes, Clitandre is captivated by her; I never saw a lover so in love.

BÉLISE, *to Ariste.*

No, no. I have overheard you. You do not know the facts; the matter is quite different from what you think.

ARISTE.

And how so, sister?

BÉLISE.

Clitandre misleads you; his heart is captive to another person.

ARISTE.

You are joking. Do you mean it is not Henriette whom he loves?

BÉLISE.

Yes, that is what I mean; I am very certain of it.

ARISTE.

But he told me himself.

BÉLISE.

Ah! yes, of course!

ARISTE.

Why, sister, I am here, sent by Clitandre himself, to ask her of her father.

BÉLISE.

Ah! very good!

ARISTE.

His love is so impatient he entreats me to urge on the marriage.

BÉLISE.

Ah! better and better! the trick could not be played more gallantly. Henriette, you must know, is a blind between us, — a skilful veil, a pretext, brother, to cover other longings of which I know the mystery; and I am very glad to set you right about it.

ARISTE.

Well, since you seem to know so much, tell us, if you please, who is the other object of his love?

BÉLISE

You wish to know?

ARISTE.

Yes; who is it?

BÉLISE.

I.

ARISTE.

You?

BÉLISE.

Yes, I, myself.

ARISTE.

Pshaw, sister!

BÉLISE.

What means that *pshaw?* What is there so surprising in the words I used? I hope my air and presence give me right to say that not one heart alone is subject to their sway. Damis, Dorante, Cléonte, and Lycidas have plainly shown the charms I have for them.

ARISTE.

Do those men love you?

BÉLISE.

Yes, with all their strength.

ARISTE.

And have they told you so?

BÉLISE.

They would not dare to take that liberty. Their reverence is so great that they have never

said one word to me of love. The offer of their heart, their vows of service were made by mute interpreters.

ARISTE.

But Damis almost never comes here.

BÉLISE.

That is to make me feel his reverent submission.

ARISTE.

And as for Dorante, he insults you, often, with sharp speeches.

BÉLISE.

The angry language of a jealous heart.

ARISTE.

Cléonte and Lycidas have married wives.

BÉLISE.

Yes, in despair at my rejection of their love.

ARISTE.

Pooh! sister; all mere fancy!

CHRYSALE, *to Bélise.*

Chimeras, from which you ought to free yourself.

BÉLISE.

Ah! chimeras! Chimeras, are they? Chimeras, I! A fine word, truly. I like chimeras, my good brothers; and I never knew till now I had them. [*Exit.*

SCENE FOURTH

CHRYSALE, ARISTE

CHRYSALE.

She is crazy, of course.

ARISTE.

And getting daily more so — But to resume once more what we were saying. Clitandre requests you to give him Henriette for his wife. What answer am I to make on your behalf?

CHRYSALE.

Why need you ask? I give my consent with all my heart, for I consider his alliance a great honour.

ARISTE.

You know that he has not abundant means and —

CHRYSALE.

That is a matter of no great consequence. He is rich in virtues which are more than wealth; and since his father and I were like two beings in one body —

ARISTE.

Let us talk with your wife and try to make her favourable to the marriage.

CHRYSALE.

It is sufficient that I accept him for my son-in-law.

ARISTE.

Yes, but to strengthen your consent it does no harm to have your wife's agreement. Come.

CHRYSALE.

Are you jesting? It is not necessary. I 'll answer for my wife and take upon myself the whole affair.

ARISTE.

But —

CHRYSALE.

Leave it to me, I say; don't be uneasy; I 'll bring her to accept the thing at once.

ARISTE.

So be it. Meantime, I 'll sound your Henriette and then return to know —

CHRYSALE.

Oh, as for that, the thing is settled now; but I will see my wife without delay.

[*Exit Ariste.*

SCENE FIFTH.

CHRYSALE, MARTINE

MARTINE.

Here 's my luck! Alas! 't is a true saying: If you want to drown your dog just say he 's mad. The service of others is a tricky business.

CHRYSALE.

Why, what 's the matter? what troubles you, Martine?

MARTINE.

Matter?

CHRYSALE.

Yes.

MARTINE.

The matter is that I 'm turned off.

CHRYSALE.

You! turned off?

MARTINE.

Yes, madame has dismissed me.

CHRYSALE.

I do not understand. How happened it?

MARTINE,

I 'm threatened with I don't know what if I 'm not out of here at once.

CHRYSALE.

No, you shall stay; I am contented with you. My wife does get her temper up at times, but I don't choose —

SCENE SIXTH

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, CHRYSALE, MARTINE

PHILAMINTE.

What! do I see you, jade! Out of here, quick! Out of this house, and never let me see you here again!

CHRYSALE.

Softly, softly.

PHILAMINTE.

No, I 've done with her.

CHRYSALE.

Hey! hey!

PHILAMINTE.

I choose that she shall go.

CHRYSALE.

But what has she done that you should choose —

PHILAMINTE.

What! do you uphold her?

CHRYSALE.

Not in the least.

PHILAMINTE.

Do you take her part against me?

CHRYSALE.

Heavens, no! I only ask what crime she has committed.

PHILAMINTE.

Do you think I would dismiss her without just cause?

CHRYSALE.

I don't say that; but certainly our servants ought —

PHILAMINTE.

No, she must go, I tell you, out of this house.

CHRYSALE.

Oh, very good; who said the contrary?

PHILAMINTE.

I will not have the wishes I express opposed.

CHRYSALE.

So be it.

PHILAMINTE.

You ought, as a reasonable husband, to take my side against her, and share my anger.

CHRYSALE.

And so I will. (*Turning to Martine*) Yes, my wife is right in sending you away; your crime is quite unpardonable.

MARTINE.

What have I done?

CHRYSALE, *in a low voice.*

Faith! I don't know.

PHILAMINTE.

She is only trying to make light of it.

CHRYSALE.

What is it? Has she broken a mirror, or some precious bit of china, and earned your wrath in that way.

PHILAMINTE.

Do you suppose I would dismiss her and be so angry for such a trifling cause as that?

CHRYSALE, *to Martine.*

What's coming now? (*To Philaminte*) It must be something of importance.

PHILAMINTE.

Undoubtedly; do you think me an unreasonable woman?

CHRYSALE.

Has she carelessly allowed some thief to steal your plate — a silver dish or bowl?

PHILAMINTE.

That would be nothing.

CHRYSALE, *to Martine.*

Oh, oh! 't is getting hot, my girl! (*To Philaminte*) Have you detected her in some dishonesty?

PHILAMINTE.

Worse than all that.

CHRYSALE.

Worse than all that?

PHILAMINTE.

Much worse, I say.

CHRYSALE, *to Martine.*

But what the devil is it, you unworthy girl? (*To Philaminte*) Eugh! has she committed—

PHILAMINTE.

With unparalleled insolence, and after frequent lessons, she insults my ear by the impropriety of a low and barbarous word which Vaugelas condemns decisively.

CHRYSALE.

Is that—

PHILAMINTE.

What! is she to be allowed, in spite of our remonstrances, to strike at the very root of

knowledge, — at grammar, which rules even kings themselves and forces them with arbitrary power to obey its laws?

CHRYSALE.

I thought her guilty of some greater wrong.

PHILAMINTE.

Do you not think this crime unpardonable?

CHRYSALE.

Of course I do.

PHILAMINTE.

I should like to see you venture to excuse it.

CHRYSALE.

I 've no idea of doing so.

BÉLISE.

It is indeed most pitiable. Although she has been instructed hundreds of times in the laws of language, she will destroy construction.

MARTINE.

I dare say all you preach is fine and good, but, for my part, I cannot talk your jargon.

PHILAMINTE.

Insolent creature! to call our language, founded on reason and distinguished usage, jargon!

MARTINE.

I say, when we can make folks understand us, that's good talking; but your fine, twisted language ain't no good.

PHILAMINTE.

Good heavens! hear her — "ain't no good!"

BÉLISE.

Oh, stubborn brain! in spite of our incessant care shall we never teach you the congruities of speech? "Ain't" and "no" destroy each other. Have we not told you, often, you cannot use two negatives?

MARTINE.

Goodness! I have n't never learned like you. I talk straight out, as folks do where I come from.

PHILAMINTE.

This is unbearable!

BÉLISE.

What shocking solecisms!

PHILAMINTE.

To a sensitive ear 't is murderous!

BÉLISE, *to Martine.*

Your mind is utterly material. Why will you, all your life, wrong grammar thus?

MARTINE.

Who says that I wrong grandma, or grandpa, either?

PHILAMINTE.

Oh, heavens!

BÉLISE.

You mistake the word. I said *grammar;* and I have often told you whence it comes.

MARTINE.

Faith! let it come from Chaillot, Pontoise, Auteuil, — I don't care.

BÉLISE.

A village soul! Grammar, by the help of verbs and nominatives, as well as nouns and adjectives, instructs us in the laws of language.

MARTINE.

Madame, I must tell you I don't know such folks.

BÉLISE.

Those are the names of words, not persons. You must learn to know how they are made to agree together.

MARTINE.

Let 'em agree or quarrel — what 's that to me?

PHILAMINTE, *to Bélise.*

For Heaven's sake, stop such useless argument! (*To Chrysale*) Then you do not choose to send her away because I wish it?

CHRYSALE.

Yes, I do. (*Aside*) 'T is always best to give in to her fancies; I won't irritate her. Retire, Martine.

PHILAMINTE.

So! you fear to offend that baggage, and that is why you speak to her in such civil tones.

CHRYSALE, *firmly.*

I? not at all. (*To Martine*) Come, be off with you! (*In a gentler voice*) Leave us, my poor girl!

[*Exit Martine.*

SCENE SEVEN

PHILAMINTE, CHRYSALE, BÉLISE.

CHRYSALE.

Now are you satisfied? You have your will and she is gone; but I do not approve of such dismissals. She was a fit girl for the work she did, and you've dismissed her for a paltry reason.

PHILAMINTE.

Would you have me keep her in my service to put my ears incessantly to torture, and hear her break all laws of usage and of reason with barbarous linguistic vices, mangled words, and vulgar proverbs dragged through the gutter of the markets?

BÉLISE.

Her blunders keep me in a cold sweat daily; she murders Vaugelas bit by bit; the least defects of her coarse mind are either pleonasm or cacophony.

CHRYSALE.

What matter if she breaks all Vaugelas' rules provided she knows how to cook. For my part, I'd rather she would make a mess of nouns and

verbs, or use a low and vulgar word a dozen times a day, than burn my meat and oversalt my soup. Good food is what I live on; not fine language. Vaugelas won't tell her how to make a stew; Malherbe and Balzac, learned as they are in using words, might prove great fools among the kitchen pots.

PHILAMINTE.

This vulgar talk is terribly depressing. What an indignity in one who calls himself a man to lower his mind to such material cares, instead of lifting it to things of soul! This miserable rag, our body, is it of such value, such importance, as to deserve a single thought? Ought we not rather to keep it out of sight?

CHRYSALE.

Pshaw! my body is myself; I choose to care for it, — rag, if you please, but my own rag is dear to me.

BÉLISE.

The body informed by mind may have its value; but, if we believe all learned persons, brother, the mind takes precedence of body, and our highest care should be to keep it nourished with the juice of knowledge.

CHRYSALE.

Faith! if it comes to nourishing your mind, the food it gets is mighty unsubstantial if all is true I hear. You have no care and no solicitude —

PHILAMINTE.

Ah! *solicitude;* how that word does grate upon my ear; 't is noisome with its antiquated style.

BÉLISE.

The word is so pretentious!

CHRYSALE.

Then what am I to say? You 'll force me to speak out, and lift the mask and vent my spleen. All the world think you fools, and I have it on my mind to —

PHILAMINTE.

Come, come!

CHRYSALE, *to Bélise.*

It is to you I 'm speaking, sister. The slightest fault of language irritates you, but you make many, you yourself, and very strange ones too, in conduct. Your everlasting books don't please me. Except for that big Plutarch in

which to press my collars, I 'd like to see the useless lot burned up. Leave learning to the learned men; take down that spyglass from the garret of this house, where it alarms the passers-by with all its apparatus. What do you want to know about the moon? attend to what is going on at home, where everything is topsy-turvy. It is n't decent, for various reasons, that women should know and study so many things. To train her children to good morals, to keep the house, and have an eye to servants, and regulate expenses with economy, — that should be a woman's study and her philosophy. Our fathers on this point were men of sense, who said a woman knew enough when the capacity of her mind could tell a doublet from a pair of breeches. Those women never read, but they lived well; their households were the theme of their discourse, their books a thimble, thread, and needles, with which they sewed the wedding outfit of their daughters. The women of the present day are much too far from such good customs. They want to write, forsooth, and to be authors! No knowledge, they think, is too profound for them; the deepest problems occupy their minds. 'T is worse in my house than in any other; here they know all except

the things they ought to know. They know, for instance, how the moon, the polar star, Venus, Saturn and Mars go round — which is more than I do! But with all the useless knowledge they take such trouble to procure, they don't know how to make the soup I like. Even my servants must have learning in order to satisfy you, and there is nothing which they do so little as what they ought to do. Discussion is the business of my household; reasoning has banished reason. One burns my roast while reading history; another dreams of verse when I want drink. My very menials follow your example; I've servants and no service. One poor girl was left me not infected with this craze, and lo, you pack her off with great ado because she can't talk Vaugelas! I tell you, sister — for 't is to you I speak — that all this folly wounds me. I don't like the Latin crowd with which you fill my house, and more particularly Monsieur Trissotin. 'T is he who has drummed into your heads this versifying; his talk is foolish trash and nothing else. Ask yourself what he has said when he has said it; for my part, I believe his brains are cracked.

PHILAMINTE.

Oh, heavens! what commonness of soul and language!

BÉLISE.

Was there ever so ponderous an assemblage of petty arguments, — a soul composed of atoms so inferior? How is it I belong to this same blood? Rather than be of such a race I would that I were dead. Ashamed, confused, I yield the ground.

[*Exit.*

SCENE EIGHTH

PHILAMINTE, CHRYSALE

PHILAMINTE.

Have you more shafts to fling?

CHRYSALE.

I? No. Don't let us quarrel; the thing is done; we 'll talk of other matters. Your eldest daughter shows aversion to the bonds of matrimony; she 's a philosopher, in short, and I make no objection; you have done very right, and have trained her well. But the youngest is of another temperament; I think it wise to provide for Henriette and choose a husband —

PHILAMINTE.

I have already thought of that, and I wish to tell you now what my intentions are. This Monsieur Trissotin for whom we are blamed, and who has not the honor of standing well in your esteem, is the man I have chosen for her husband. Controversy is superfluous; the matter is resolved upon. Say nothing of this choice as yet; I wish to speak to Henriette before you see her. I have my reasons for making her approve my choice, and I shall know quite well if you have spoken to her previously. [*Exit.*

SCENE NINTH

ARISTE, CHRYSALE

ARISTE.

Well! exit wife; I plainly see you have had some talk about this matter, brother.

CHRYSALE.

Yes.

ARISTE.

With what success? Is Henriette ours? Did she consent? Is the matter settled?

CHRYSALE.

Not quite, as yet.

ARISTE.

Does she refuse?

CHRYSALE.

No.

ARISTE.

Does she give in?

CHRYSALE.

Not in the least.

ARISTE.

What then?

CHRYSALE.

She offers me another son-in-law.

ARISTE.

Another husband?

CHRYSALE.

Yes, another.

ARISTE.

Who is it?

CHRYSALE.

Monsieur Trissotin.

ARISTE.

What! that Monsieur Trissotin?

CHRYSALE.

Yes, the man who talks in Latin verses.

ARISTE.

Did you accept him?

CHRYSALE.

I? Never! God forbid!

ARISTE.

What did you answer?

CHRYSALE.

Nothing; and I am very glad I did not speak, for thus I am not committed.

ARISTE.

A fine reason, that! you made good headway, truly! But, at least, you proposed to her Clitandre?

CHRYSALE.

No, for when I saw she had another in her mind I thought it better not to go too far.

ARISTE.

Such prudence is indeed extreme! Are you not ashamed of your weakness? Is it possible that a man can be so soft as to let his wife have absolute power, and not even dare to oppose her will?

CHRYSALE.

Good heavens! brother, it is easy for you to talk, for you don't know how wrangling wearies me. I like peace, repose, and gentleness; but my wife is terrible when she 's out of humor. She makes a fine ado about being a philosopher, yet for all that her temper is none the better; and her mind, trained to despise all comfort, puts no check upon the asperity of her wrath. Oppose the whims she gets into her head, and you 'll have a week of storms. I tremble when she takes that tone; I don't know where to put myself, for she 's a veritable dragon. And yet, with all her deviltry, I have to coax and call her "love" and "darling."

ARISTE.

Pshaw! she simply makes a fool of you. Your wife is sovereign mistress because you are a coward. Her power is based upon your weak-

ness. It is from you alone she gets the right of lording it. You let her override you and lead you by the nose. What! knowing the view that others take of it, can't you resolve to be for once a man, and make your wife yield to your wishes? Have you no nerve to say, "I will"? Is it possible that you will sacrifice your daughter shamelessly to the crazy notions of your womenkind, and let that idiot get your property because, forsooth, he dins into their ears a dozen Latin words? — a pedant, whom your wife apostrophizes as a philosopher, a wit, a poet whose gallant verses never yet were equalled; whereas, as everybody knows, he 's nothing of the kind. A little more, and the thing becomes a farce; your cowardice deserves to be a laughing-stock.

Chrysale.

Yes, you are right; I see I am to blame. Brother, I 'll show more strength of mind —

Ariste.

Well said.

Chrysale.

It is a shameful thing to be submissive to a woman's will.

ARISTE.

You are right.

CHRYSALE.

She takes advantage of my gentleness.

ARISTE.

Most true.

CHRYSALE.

I am too easy-going.

ARISTE.

No doubt of that.

CHRYSALE.

But I will let her know this very day that my daughter is my daughter, and that *I* am master to choose a husband for her as I will.

ARISTE.

Come, that is sensible; now you are doing as I think you should.

CHRYSALE.

You are Clitandre's friend and know his dwelling; tell him to come to me at once.

ARISTE.

I 'll go immediately.

CHRYSALE.

I 've suffered long enough; henceforth I 'll let them know I am indeed a man.

END OF SECOND ACT.

Act Third

SCENE FIRST

PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

PHILAMINTE.

LET us sit here and listen at our ease to poems whose every meaning must, word by word, be weighed.

ARMANDE.

I burn to hear them.

BÉLISE.

We are dying of that desire.

PHILAMINTE, *to Trissotin.*

Each line that comes from you has charms for me.

ARMANDE.

To me they are sweet beyond compare.

BÉLISE.

They are dainty morsels given to my ear.

PHILAMINTE.

Do not compel our pressing hopes to languish.

ARMANDE.

Hasten to gratify them.

BÉLISE.

Yes, make haste and expedite our pleasure.

PHILAMINTE.

Bestow your epigram on our impatience.

TRISSOTIN, *to Philaminte.*

Alas! madame, 't is but a new-born babe — and yet its fate may justly move you, since I have given birth to it within your precincts.

PHILAMINTE.

Knowing its father makes it dear to me.

TRISSOTIN.

Your approbation, madame, is its mother.

BÉLISE.

What wit he has!

SCENE SECOND.

HENRIETTE, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE.

PHILAMINTE, *to Henriette, who is retiring.*

Here, here! why do you run away?

HENRIETTE.

Lest I disturb this pleasant interview.

PHILAMINTE.

Come nearer, and take part with all your ears in listening to things marvellous.

HENRIETTE.

I know so little of written marvels; my bent is not, you know, to things of mind.

PHILAMINTE.

No matter; stay; I have a secret to tell you presently which it imports you much to hear.

TRISSOTIN, *to Henriette.*

So knowledge has nothing that inspires you? You pique yourself on knowing only how to charm?

HENRIETTE.

I care for one as little as the other; I 've no desire to —

BÉLISE.

Ah! I entreat you, let us think only of the new-born babe.

PHILAMINTE, *to Lépine.*

Come, boy; bring seats for all. (*Lépine tumbles down.*) See that foolish boy! why should he fall, having been taught the principles of equilibrium?

BÉLISE, *to Lépine.*

Cannot you see, you ignoramus, the causes of your fall? You deflected from a given point that which we call centre of gravity.

LÉPINE.

I saw nothing, being flat on the ground.

PHILAMINTE, *to Lépine, who goes out.*

Blockhead!

TRISSOTIN.

Lucky for him he is not made of glass.

ARMANDE.

Ah, wit in everything!

BÉLISE.

'T is inexhaustible. (*They sit down.*)

PHILAMINTE.

Now serve us quickly the dainty morsels of this feast of mind.

TRISSOTIN.

To assuage the hunger you display, a single dish of eight brief couplets seems a paltry thing. I think I should do well to add to the epigram (or rather I should say the madrigal) the ragout of a sonnet which had been thought — at the house of a princess — to have some delicacy. 'T is seasoned throughout with Attic salt and you will find it, I think, a tasty thing.

ARMANDE.

I do not doubt we shall.

PHILAMINTE.

Let us hear it, quickly

BÉLISE, *interrupting Trissotin every time he begins to read.*

My heart is quivering with expectation — I do love poesy to infatuation — especially when verses are so gallantly expressed —

PHILAMINTE.

But if we talk so much he cannot read them.

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

Son —

BÉLISE, *to Henriette.*

Silence, niece!

ARMANDE.

Do let him read!

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*[1]

Sonnet to Princesse Uranie, on her Fever.

Methinks your prudence slumbering lies,
In treating so magnificently,
And lodging so superlatively,
That cruelest of enemies.

BÉLISE.

What a sweet opening!

ARMANDE.

How gallant his way of putting it!

[1] This sonnet is in the "Œuvres Galantes en prose et en vers," by Charles Cotin; published by Étienne Loison, Paris, 1663. It is entitled, "Sonnet to Mademoiselle de Longueville, now Duchesse de Nemours, on her quartan fever." Cotin was famous for his vanity. Alluding to his name he said: "My initials, C. C., if turned to face each other form a circle, which means, somewhat mystically, that my works will encircle the earth. In fact my 'Enigmas' have been translated into Spanish and Italian, and my 'Song of Songs' has spread throughout the world." He was a legitimate butt for Molière's satire.

PHILAMINTE.

No poet has the art of easy verse like him!

ARMANDE.

"Prudence slumbering lies" — to that we all must bow.

BÉLISE.

Lodging an enemy to me is full of charm.

PHILAMINTE.

But I prefer those adverbs joined so admirably, — "magnificently," "superlatively."

BÉLISE.

Let us hear the rest.

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

Methinks your prudence slumbering lies
In treating so magnificently,
And lodging so superlatively,
That cruelest of enemies.

ARMANDE.

Slumbering prudence!

BÉLISE.

Lodging an enemy!

PHILAMINTE.

Superlatively! magnificently!

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

Drive it away, say what they will,
From those superb apartments
Where, with ungrateful insolence,
Your beauteous life it seeks to kill.

BÉLISE.

Ah! stop, stop! let me take breath, for mercy's sake!

ARMANDE.

Give leisure to admire, I beg of you.

PHILAMINTE.

Something, I know not what, flows through these lines to the depths of our souls and makes them faint with joy.

ARMANDE.

"Drive it away, say what they will,
From those superb apartments."

How sweetly said, — "superb apartments!" and with what wit the metaphor is put!

PHILAMINTE.

"Drive it away, say what they will!"

Ah! that "say what they will" is admirable. To my feeling, those words are absolutely priceless.

ARMANDE.

My heart also is in love with that "say what they will."

BÉLISE.

Yes, I agree with both of you: "say what they will" is happy.

ARMANDE.

Would I had written it!

BÉLISE.

It is, in itself, a drama.

PHILAMINTE.

But can you comprehend, as I do, all its subtlety?

ARMANDE *and* BÉLISE.

Oh! oh!

PHILAMINTE.

"Drive it away, say what they will"— if any one takes sides with the fever, do not listen to them; pay no heed to idle talk. "Drive it away, say what they will." That "say what they will" says much more than appears upon the surface. I don't know, I am sure, if others are like me, but I perceive in that brief sentence millions of words.

BÉLISE.

Truly, more things than words are in it.

PHILAMINTE, *to Trissotin.*

But when you wrote that charming "say what they will," did you yourself perceive its full import? Were you aware of all 't would say to us, and did you know the wit and wisdom in it?

TRISSOTIN.

Er — oh! ah!

ARMANDE.

That word "ungrateful" also grasps my mind; ungrateful fever, unjust, uncivil, which ill-treats all those who let it lodge among them.

PHILAMINTE.

In short, both quatrains are most admirable; go on to the triplets if you please.

ARMANDE.

Ah! one moment! read those words again, "say what they will."

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

Drive them away, say what they will,

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE.

"Say what they will!"

TRISSOTIN, *reading*.

From those superb apartments.

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE.

"From those superb apartments!"

TRISSOTIN, *reading*.

Where with ungrateful insolence

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE.

Ungrateful fever!

TRISSOTIN, *reading*.

Your beauteous life it seeks to kill.

PHILAMINTE.

"Beauteous life!"

ARMANDE *and* BÉLISE.

Ah!

TRISSOTIN, *reading*.

What! has it no respect for good
That it should seek to suck your blood,
And night and day to injure you?

PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE.

Ah!—

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

If it goes with you to the bath,
Refrain no longer from your wrath,
But drown it, drown it, I conjure you.

PHILAMINTE.

Words can no farther go.

BÉLISE.

I faint —

ARMANDE.

I swoon with pleasure.

PHILAMINTE.

A thousand tender quiverings seize me.

ARMANDE.

"If it goes with you to the bath."

BÉLISE.

"Refrain no longer from your wrath."

PHILAMINTE.

"But drown it, drown it," — with your own hands, there, in the bath; refrain no longer from your wrath, but drown it, drown it!

ARMANDE.

At every step we make among your verses new charms appear.

BÉLISE.

Ravished, we wander on.

PHILAMINTE.

We cannot step except on beauty.

ARMANDE.

Each little path is strewn with roses.

TRISSOTIN.

My sonnet seems to you —

PHILAMINTE.

Most admirable! novel! No one has ever put forth anything so fine.

BÉLISE, *to Henriette.*

What! no emotion at that fine recital? You cut a sorry figure, my poor niece.

HENRIETTE.

We cut such figures as we can in this world. All are not wits, you know, aunt.

TRISSOTIN, *to Henriette.*

Perhaps my verses bored you?

HENRIETTE.

No; for I did not listen to them.

PHILAMINTE.

Come, let us listen to the epigram.

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

On a yellow coach given by a lady to a friend.[1]

PHILAMINTE.

Even your titles are so choice.

ARMANDE.

Their novelty prepares us for countless strokes of wit.

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

Love doth so dearly sell its tie —

PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, *and* BÉLISE.

Ah!

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

That half my wealth it costs to buy
The splendid coach which you behold
Embossed and spangled o'er with gold
Till nought can equal but Danaë's
This pompous triumph of my Lais —

PHILAMINTE.

Ah, "my Lais!" What erudition!

[1] Also by Cotin; in the same collection. It is called "A Madrigal on an amaranth-colored coach bought for a lady by a friend." The last two lines are: —

Ne dis plus qu'il est amarante,
Dis plutôt qu'il est de ma rente.

ARMANDE.

Danaë! how charming an idea!

BÉLISE.

The metaphor is pretty indeed, and worth a million others.

TRISSOTIN, *reading.*

Love doth so dearly sell its tie
That half my wealth it costs to buy
The splendid coach which you behold,
Embossed and spangled o'er with gold,
Till nought can equal but Danaë's
This pompous triumph of my Lais:
Then say no longer it is yellow —
Say rather it is golden color.

ARMANDE.

Oh! oh! oh! that final turn is so wholly unexpected.

PHILAMINTE.

None but Monsieur Trissotin can write in such pure taste.

BÉLISE.

"Then say no longer it is yellow
Say rather it is golden color" —

See how subtlely that combines the coach, its color, and its cost.

PHILAMINTE.

I do not know if instinct warned me, but from the moment that I knew you I have admired your poems and your prose.

TRISSOTIN.

If you would show us something of your own, no doubt I should return your admiration.

PHILAMINTE.

I write no poems; but I have ground for hope that I may show you soon, in confidence, eight chapters on the plan of our academy. Plato went no farther than the project in writing his Republic; but I desire to carry his idea into complete effect, and I have now committed it, in prose, to paper. I feel a strange vexation for the wrongs done to us as to intellect. I long to avenge all women, such as we are, for the debased condition to which men relegate us, — limiting our talents to futilities, and closing the gates of knowledge to our sex.

ARMANDE.

'T is too bitter an offence to woman, this restriction of her intellect to the mere judgment of a petticoat, the set of a mantle, the beauties of a bit of lace or a new brocade.

BÉLISE.

Women must rise above this shameful lot, and lift their minds to masterful conditions.

TRISSOTIN.

My reverence for ladies is well known; and if I render homage to the sparkle of their eyes, I likewise duly honor the flashing of their wit.

PHILAMINTE.

Our sex does justice to you as to that. But now we wish to show to certain minds, whose proud assumption treats us with contempt, that women also are supplied with brains; that they can found, like men, learned assemblies, — conducted, too, by better rules than theirs, — meetings at which they seek to reunite that which men separate; blending fine language with the loftiest knowledge; revealing Nature by experiments; and drawing forth on every topic that may be advanced the views of every sect, although espousing none.

TRISSOTIN.

For my part, I am wedded to the views of peripateticism.

PHILAMINTE.

As for abstractions, I love platonism.

ARMANDE.

Epicure delights me; his doctrines are so strong.

BÉLISE.

For my part I can accommodate myself to things of sense. What seems so difficult to me is to endure the void; my tastes incline me to all subtile matters.

TRISSOTIN.

Descartes' opinion of the magnet coincides with mine.

ARMANDE.

I love his whirlwinds.

PHILAMINTE.

I, his falling stars.

ARMANDE.

Ah! how I long to have our sessions opened, and signalize ourselves by some discovery.

TRISSOTIN.

Much is expected of your brilliant minds; Nature has few obscurities for you.

PHILAMINTE.

I have already, and I say it without conceit, made a discovery. I have distinctly seen the men in the moon.

BÉLISE.

I have not as yet seen men, but I saw steeples as plainly as I now see you.

ARMANDE.

We shall analyze to its depths not only natural philosophy, but grammar, history, poesy, ethics and politics.

PHILAMINTE.

There are features in ethics which captivate my soul, — 't was formerly the love of lofty minds, — but, I must say, I give the palm to the Stoics; I know of nothing finer than their wisdom.

ARMANDE.

In the matter of language our rules will soon be known; we mean to make a great revulsion there. Out of antipathy, be it just or natural, we have taken a mortal hatred to certain words, both verbs and nouns; and these we have agreed to banish. In fact, we are preparing deadly

sentences against them; and we propose to open our learned conferences by prohibiting the use of divers terms, of which we seek to purge both prose and poesy.

PHILAMINTE.

But the highest purpose of our academy — a noble enterprise with which I am enraptured, a glorious scheme which all the illustrious spirits of posterity will laud — is the curtailment of those odious syllables which make a scandal of the finest words; those playthings of the fools of every age; those senseless platitudes of sorry wits, the source of double-meanings with which the world insults a woman's modesty.

TRISSOTIN.

Truly, an admirable project!

BÉLISE.

Yes; you shall see our statutes when they are completed.

TRISSOTIN.

They cannot fail to be both glorious and wise.

ARMANDE.

According to our laws we judge all works of prose and poesy; each and all must be sub-

mitted to us. Beyond the circle of ourselves and friends, none will have intellect. We shall seek everywhere for things to criticise, finding that none but we know how to write.

SCENE THIRD

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE, TRISSOTIN, LÉPINE

LEPINE, *to Trissotin.*

Monsieur, a man is here who wants to see you; he is dressed in black and speaks in a gentle voice.

TRISSOTIN, *to Philaminte.*

He is, no doubt, the learned friend who has often urged me to obtain for him the honor of your acquaintance.

PHILAMINTE.

You have all the credit of his introduction.

(*Trissotin goes to meet Vadius.*)

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SCENE FOURTH

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE

PHILAMINTE, *to Armande and Bélise.*

Let us do honor to our intellect. (*To Henriette who is going away*) Here, here! I told you in the plainest terms I wanted you.

HENRIETTE.

But why?

PHILAMINTE.

Stay, and you soon will know.

SCENE FIFTH

TRISSOTIN, VADIUS, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE

TRISSOTIN, *presenting Vadius.*

This, madame, is a man who vows that he is dying of a desire to know you. In presenting him I fear no reproach for introducing to this house an alien spirit; I assure you that he can hold his own among the finest minds.

PHILAMINTE.

That you present him guarantees his worth.

TRISSOTIN.

He is fully conversant with ancient authors; and he knows Greek, madame, with any man in France.

PHILAMINTE, *to Bélise.*

Greek! oh, heavens! Greek! Sister, he knows Greek!

BÉLISE, *to Armande.*

Do you hear that, niece? He knows Greek!

ARMANDE.

Greek! how sweet!

PHILAMINTE, *to Vadius.*

Can it be that you know Greek? Ah, permit me, monsieur, I entreat, for love of Greek, to embrace you.

(*Vadius also embraces Bélise and Armande.*)

HENRIETTE, *to Vadius, who offers to embrace her.*

Excuse me, monsieur, I do not know Greek.

(*They sit down.*)

PHILAMINTE.

I have a marvellous respect for all Greek books.

VADIUS.

I fear to be importunate by the ardor with which I offer you my homage, madame. Perhaps I intrude upon some learned meeting.

PHILAMINTE.

With Greek there can be no intrusion, monsieur.

TRISSOTIN.

Moreover, he does marvels in verse as well as prose; he could, if he were willing, show you specimens.

VADIUS.

The failing of authors is that they monopolize the conversation with their writings; and wheresoe'er they are — at court, in the ladies' chambers, or at table — they read aloud their wearisome productions. As for me, I see nothing so silly as a writer who goes about collecting incense; seizing the first-comer by the ear and making him the martyr of his lucubrations. No one has ever seen me guilty of such foolish vanity. In this I follow the precepts of a Greek, who made a special dogma forbidding his disciples the unworthy ardor with which they pushed their works. Here are some little

verses for young lovers, on which I should be glad to have your sentiments.

TRISSOTIN.

Your muse has beauties which no other poems have.

VADIUS.

But Venus and the Graces reign in yours.

TRISSOTIN.

You have an easy turn of phrase, and a fine choice of words.

VADIUS.

Ithos and pathos permeate your work.

TRISSOTIN.

Your eclogues have a style surpassing the soft charm of Virgil and Theocritus.

VADIUS.

Your odes possess a noble, gallant, tender air, which leaves your Horace far behind you.

TRISSOTIN.

But what so amorous as your chansonnettes?

VADIUS.

Can anything be found to equal your fine sonnets?

TRISSOTIN.

Nothing can be more charming than your little rondels.

VADIUS.

Nothing so witty as your madrigals.

TRISSOTIN.

In ballads, above all, I think that you excel.

VADIUS.

Your rhymes I find especially felicitous.

TRISSOTIN.

If France could only know your value —

VADIUS.

If the present age did justice to great minds —

TRISSOTIN.

In gilded coaches you would pace the streets.

VADIUS.

Statues would be erected in your honor. Hm! here is a ballad, and I wish that you would plainly —

TRISSOTIN.

Have you seen a little sonnet on the quartan fever of Princesse Uranie?

VADIUS.

Yes; I heard it read last night in company.

TRISSOTIN.

You know the author?

VADIUS.

No; but I do know this, — his sonnet is quite worthless.

TRISSOTIN.

But many persons think it admirable.

VADIUS.

That does not hinder it from being miserable. If you have read it you must surely be of my opinion.

TRISSOTIN.

No, and I never shall be. Few persons, as I think, could write a sonnet like it.

VADIUS.

May Heaven forbid that I should ever do so!

TRISSOTIN.

I maintain no better sonnet can be written; and my chief reason is that I am its author.

VADIUS.

You?

TRISSOTIN.

I.

VADIUS.

I cannot think how this has happened.

TRISSOTIN.

Simply because I have the great misfortune not to please you.

VADIUS.

My mind must have been abstracted while I listened; or else the reader spoiled your sonnet in the reading. But let us drop the subject now, and turn to my ballad.

TRISSOTIN.

Ballads, to my taste, are most insipid; the fashion is gone by; it savors of senility.

VADIUS.

The ballad has charms for many minds.

TRISSOTIN.

That does not hinder it from displeasing me.

VADIUS.

'T is none the worse because it does displease you.

TRISSOTIN.

It has, I know, a charm for pedants.

VADIUS.

And yet you say you do not like it!

TRISSOTIN.

You need not give your attributes to others.
(*They both rise.*)

VADIUS.

You fling your own upon me most impertinently.

TRISSOTIN.

Pooh! you poor scribbler! blotter of paper!

VADIUS.

Pshaw! poetaster! disgrace of the craft!

TRISSOTIN.

Hawker of verses! impudent plagiarist!

VADIUS.

Insolent pedant! —

PHILAMINTE.

Hey! messieurs, messieurs, what are you saying?

TRISSOTIN, *to Vadius.*

Go! go! make restitution of the shameful thefts to which the Greek and Latin writers have a claim.

VADIUS.

Begone yourself! Beg pardon of Parnassus for having mutilated Horace in your verses.

TRISSOTIN.

Remember your own book and its dead failure.

VADIUS.

Remember how your own miscarried.

TRISSOTIN.

My fame is well-established; in vain you try to rend it.

VADIUS.

So, so; to Boileau I refer you, to the author of "Satires."

TRISSOTIN.

And I refer you to the same.

VADIUS.

I have the satisfaction of knowing that Boileau treats me with honor; he gives me, in passing, a little touch among the authors who are most revered. But you he never

leaves in peace; all the world sees you are his butt.

TRISSOTIN.

Therefore my rank in letters is the more honored. He puts you in a crowd like any common scribe; he thinks one blow enough to crush you, and never has he done you yet the honor to strike a second. But me he attacks alone; counting me a noble adversary on whom he feels it needful to employ his utmost effort. His redoubled blows prove that he knows he gains no victory.[1]

VADIUS.

My pen shall teach you to know the man I am.

TRISSOTIN.

And mine shall show you who 's your master.

VADIUS.

I defy you! in verse and prose, in Greek and Latin I defy you!

TRISSOTIN.

Well, well! we 'll meet alone at Barbin's.

[*Exit Vadius.*

[1] This is said to be an actual scene which took place between Cotin and Ménage at the house of La Grande Mademoiselle, apropos of the sonnet quoted above.

SCENE SIXTH.

TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, BÉLISE, HENRIETTE.

TRISSOTIN.

You must not blame my anger, madame. It was your judgment of the sonnet he so audaciously attacked that I defended.

PHILAMINTE.

I desire to compose your feelings; let us talk of other things. Henriette, come here. For some time past my soul has felt uneasy because you show no sign of mental gifts; but I have found a way by which you will acquire them.

HENRIETTE.

It is not necessary to take such pains for me. These learned conversations are not within my province. I like to live at ease, and I observe that those who take part in them are apt to strain themselves in order to be clever. 'T is an ambition which I do not have; I am content, dear mother, to be stupid; I 'd rather say mere common things than worry myself to death to think of witty ones.

PHILAMINTE.

Yes; but it wounds me: I do not choose to allow so great a shame in a daughter of my blood. Beauty of feature is a fragile ornament, a fading flower, the splendor of a moment, belonging only to the epidermis: beauty of mind is firm, inherent, lasting. I have long sought a means of giving you this beauty which years cannot mow down; of instilling into your soul a desire for knowledge and all great acquirements; and the idea on which my wishes centre is to attach you to some man of intellect. (*Motioning to Trissotin*) I find this man in Monsieur Trissotin; whom I now command you to accept as the husband for whom I destine you.

HENRIETTE.

Destine *me*, mother?

PHILAMINTE.

Yes, you. Don't play the simpleton.

BÉLISE, *to Trissotin.*

I understand you; your eyes are asking my permission to lay elsewhere a heart that is my own. Do so; I am willing. I yield you for this tie; it is a hymen which conveys to you prosperity.

TRISSOTIN, *to Henriette.*

I know not what to say in my delight; this marriage, with which I find myself thus honored, puts me —

HENRIETTE.

Softly, monsieur; it is not made as yet. You need not be so pressing.

PHILAMINTE.

Is that a way to answer? Do you not know — Enough! you understand me. (*To Trissotin*) She will come to her senses soon; let us leave her to think it over.

SCENE SEVENTH

HENRIETTE, ARMANDE

ARMANDE.

You see the care our mother takes of you. Her choice could not have fallen on a more illustrious husband.

HENRIETTE.

If the choice is so brilliant, why not take it yourself?

ARMANDE.

'T is on you, not on me, that his hand is bestowed.

HENRIETTE.

Then I'll yield it to you, as my elder sister.

ARMANDE.

If marriage were to me as charming as it is to you, I would accept your offer with delight.

HENRIETTE.

If I, like you, had pedants on the brain, I might consider him a pleasing husband.

ARMANDE.

Well, though our tastes are different as to that, girls must obey their parents, sister. Our mother has absolute power over us; and you need not hope by your resistance —

SCENE EIGHTH

CHRYSALE, ARISTE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, ARMANDE

CHRYSALE, *to Henriette, presenting to her Clitandre.*

Come, my daughter, you must now approve my wishes. Take off your glove and put your

hand in monsieur's. Regard him henceforth as the man whose wife I mean that you shall be.

ARMANDE.

In this direction, sister, your inclinations are not wanting.

HENRIETTE.

Girls must obey their parents, sister; fathers have absolute power over us.

ARMANDE.

Mothers have equal rights to our obedience.

CHRYSALE.

What is all this about?

ARMANDE.

It means I fully understand that you and our mother do not agree about this marriage. There is another husband whom she —

CHRYSALE.

Hold your tongue, chatterer; go and philosophize with your mother to your heart's content, and do not meddle with my actions. Tell her my wishes in this matter, and warn her that she is not to come and din my ears with hers. Now, be off with you.

SCENE NINTH

CHRYSALE, ARISTE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE

ARISTE.

Well done! you are doing marvels.

CLITANDRE.

What happiness! what joy! Ah, fate is good to me!

CHRYSALE, *to Clitandre.*

Come, take her hand and go before us; lead her to her chamber. (*To Ariste*) Ah! sweet caresses! my heart is moved by such affection; 't will cheer my coming age and bring to memory the loves of youth.

END OF THIRD ACT.

Act Fourth

SCENE FIRST

PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE

ARMANDE

YES, her mind completely lost its balance; she took a pride in her obedience; her heart was in such haste to yield that she scarcely waited, even though I was there, to receive his orders. And yet she seemed less eager to follow her father's wishes than to brave the orders of her mother.

PHILAMINTE.

I 'll let her know whose laws the rights of reason force her to obey; and which of the two, mother or father, spirit or matter, soul or sense, must govern.

ARMANDE.

They owed you, at least, the compliment of asking your consent. 'T was strange behavior in that little Clitandre to wish to be your son-in-law in spite of you.

PHILAMINTE.

He has not seen the fate to which he might aspire. I thought his person pleasing and I liked your loves; but his behavior has dissatisfied me utterly. He knows that I — and God be thanked 't is so — employ myself in writing, yet he has never asked me to read my writings to him.

SCENE SECOND

CLITANDRE, *entering softly and unheard,* ARMANDE, PHILAMINTE.

ARMANDE.

I would not suffer Henriette, if I were you, to be his wife. It would be doing me the utmost wrong to think I say this from self-interest, or that the base trick he is seen to play me has filled my heart with secret spite. Against such blows our souls are strengthened by the solid help of true philosophy, which lifts us high above such pain. But to treat *you* as he has done exhausts all patience; your honor is concerned in being contrary to his suit. He is a man whom you ought not to like; I never

knew him, when we talked together, to show that he esteemed you in his heart.

PHILAMINTE.

Young fool!

ARMANDE.

And when your fame is noised about and you are praised, he turns to ice.

PHILAMINTE.

The brute!

ARMANDE.

A score of times I 've read to him your poems, but he never thought them fine.

PHILAMINTE.

What insolence!

ARMANDE.

We often argued on them, he and I, and you have no idea what foolish —

CLITANDRE, *to Armande.*

Hey! softly, I entreat you. A little charity, or, at least, a little truth. What harm have I done you? What is my offence that I should find arrayed against me all your eloquence, striving to destroy my credit and make me

odious to one whose help I need? Speak, say what reason have you for this shocking anger? I will make madame, here, our judge in equity.

ARMANDE.

If I felt the anger of which you would accuse me I could find grounds enough to justify it. You deserve it all too much. First love has claims so sacred on the soul that lovers should lose fortune, even life itself, rather than turn its flame to other objects. No horror equals that of broken vows; a faithless man is morally a monster.

CLITANDRE.

Do you call it faithless to obey commands your pride imposed upon me? If I offend you now, the cause lies there. Your charms possessed my heart; for two years did it glow with constant love; there were no eager cares, devotions, services, I did not offer you with loving sacrifice. But all this love and all my service could not move you; I found you steadily opposed to my affection, and what you then refused I offered to another. Madame, is this my fault or yours? Did my heart seek this change, or did you drive me to it? Do I leave you? or have you banished me?

ARMANDE.

Do you call it opposition to your love to strive to weed it of its vulgar nature and bring it to that purity which is the glory of a perfect love? Can you not keep your thoughts, for my sake, free of sense? Do you not feel the gentle charm of the hearts' union, into which no corporal element may enter? No, you can only love with a coarse love and all the clogging ties of matter. To keep alive a flame like yours you must have marriage and what follows it. Ah, what strange love is that! How far indeed are lofty souls from such terrestrial fires! The senses have no part in their true love — a love that seeks the wedlock of the heart alone; abandoning the rest, a thing unworthy! for pure and spotless joys like those of heaven. Such joys inspire virtuous hopes without a leaning toward low desires. Nothing impure can mingle with such aims. We love for love's sake and for nothing else. Ours are the transports of the mind alone; we do not even know we have a body.

CLITANDRE.

Unhappily for me, madame, I have, begging your pardon, a body as well as soul. The one

clings to the other so that I cannot part them. I have not the art of such detachments; heaven has denied me that philosophy; my soul and body march in company. Nothing is nobler, as you truly say, than purified desires of the mind, unions of heart, and tender thoughts untrammelled by the commerce of the senses. But for myself, such love is too ethereal. I am a little common, as you think me. I love with my whole being; and the love I win must be, I own, the whole of her I love. There is no ground for blame in this. Without disparaging your lofty sentiments, I see that in the world my way prevails. Marriage is now too much the fashion, its tie is held to be too good, too sweet, to make the wish I felt to be your husband a reason why you should be so offended.

ARMANDE.

Well, monsieur, well! since, without listening to my words, your brutal sentiments insist on satisfaction, and you require bonds of flesh and corporal chains to keep you faithful, I will subdue my mind — if my mother so desires it — and consent, for your sake, to the thing you wish.

CLITANDRE.

It is too late, madame; another has your place. If I turned back to you I should unworthily requite the love and ill deserve the haven in which I have found refuge from your pride.

PHILAMINTE.

But, let me ask, are you expecting my consent to this other marriage, on which you seem to count? Among your visions have you never dreamed that I might choose for Henriette another husband?

CLITANDRE.

Ah! madame, what a choice is yours! Condemn me not to so much ignominy. Spare me the odious fate of seeing myself the rival of Monsieur Trissotin. Your passion for these so-called wits, which is most contrary to my feelings, could not select a more distasteful adversary. Some men there are, nay, many, to whom the bad taste of the present day grants merit; but Monsieur Trissotin dupes no one. The world has judged the writings he bestows upon it. Beyond the circle of this house he is known everywhere for what he is. A score of times I have been lost in wonder to hear

you lauding to the skies some silly nonsense you would be the first to disavow if you had written it yourself.

PHILAMINTE.

We see him in this house, and judge him, too, with other eyes than yours.

SCENE THIRD[1]

TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, CLITANDRE

TRISSOTIN, *to Philaminte.*

I have a wondrous piece of news to tell you, madame; we have escaped a mighty danger while we slept. A heavenly body passed beside us and fell athwart our vortex. Had it collided with the earth, our planet must have been shivered, like glass, to atoms.

PHILAMINTE.

Let us postpone the subject to another time, for monsieur, here, sees neither rhyme nor reason

[1] Cotin had lately published (December, 1664, and January, 1665) a long and very foolish dissertation entitled "Galanterie sur la Comête apparue en Décembre, 1664." This scene is an allusion to it. — AIMÉ-MARTIN.

in such matters. He assumes to cherish ignorance, and to hate, above all things, knowledge and mental gifts.

CLITANDRE.

That truth needs modifying, madame; let me explain. I hate the knowledge and the mental gifts that spoil the person; but no others. In themselves these things are good and noble; but I would rather rank myself among the ignorant than be a learned man like some I know.

TRISSOTIN.

For my part, I do not allow that knowledge can spoil any one.

CLITANDRE.

And my opinion is that knowledge is liable to make, in deed and word, great fools of some men.

TRISSOTIN.

Your paradox is bold.

CLITANDRE.

Its proof, methinks, can easily be given. If reasons lack, I 'm sure, in any case, that notable examples are not wanting.

TRISSOTIN.

You may cite some that are no proof at all.

CLITANDRE.

I need not go abroad to find them.

TRISSOTIN.

For my part, I don't know a single such example.

CLITANDRE.

I see them plainly, — and they hurt my sight.

TRISSOTIN.

Till now I have supposed 't was ignorance that made men fools, not knowledge.

CLITANDRE.

Then you thought wrong; for I assure you that the learned fool is a far greater fool than the fool of ignorance.

TRISSOTIN.

Public opinion is against your dictum; ignorance and folly are held to be synonymous.

CLITANDRE.

Taking the actual meaning of the words, pedant and fool are nearer still allied.

TRISSOTIN.

Yes, the folly of one is made the more discernible.

CLITANDRE.

And learning, in the other, adds to foolishness.

TRISSOTIN.

Knowledge enfolds within itself its high deserving.

CLITANDRE.

Knowledge in fools becomes impertinence.

TRISSOTIN.

Ignorance must have some special charms for you, since you take arms in its defence so warmly.

CLITANDRE.

If ignorance has charmed me, as you say, 't is only since a certain sort of learned man offends my sight.

TRISSOTIN.

Those certain learned men, if we could know them, might prove of greater worth than certain other persons who display themselves.

CLITANDRE.

Yes, if we trust those certain learned men; but that is what those certain other persons never do.

PHILAMINTE, *to Clitandre.*

Monsieur, it seems to me —

CLITANDRE.

Ah! madame, spare me! Monsieur is strong enough without your aid. I have enough to do already with such a rough assailant, and though I do defend myself, 't is only by retreating.

ARMANDE.

The offensive sharpness of your repartees —

CLITANDRE.

What! still another champion? Then I give up the game.

PHILAMINTE.

Such tilts are only suffered at our meetings provided no attack is made on persons.

CLITANDRE.

Ah, madame, there is no offence for Monsieur Trissotin in that. Believe me, he 'll take a jeer with any man in France; and many a shaft

has pierced him without his honor being pricked to more than laughing at it.

TRISSOTIN, *to Philaminte.*

I am not surprised in this attack upon me to find that monsieur takes the ground he does. He is much in vogue at court — that tells the tale. The court, as everybody knows, takes no account of intellect; in fact, it has some interest in protecting ignorance. 'T is as a courtier, therefore, he defends it.

CLITANDRE.

You have a grudge against that luckless court, which has the great misfortune of having all you wits declaim against it. You quarrel with it for your own mishaps; you arraign its want of taste to explain your failures. Permit me, Monsieur Trissotin, to tell you, with all the respect your name inspires, that you had better, you and your brethren, speak in a milder tone about the court. For, judge it rightly, as it truly is, 't is not so stupid as you learned gentry say. It has sound common-sense with which to comprehend the things of life; good taste is formed there; and its worldly knowledge is more than worth the musty learning of your pedantry.

TRISSOTIN.

We see the effects of its good taste!

CLITANDRE.

Come, say what makes you think its taste so bad.

TRISSOTIN.

What makes me think it? Why, those learned men, Rasius and Baldus, do honor to the nation by their knowledge, and yet their merits, openly displayed, have won no notice and no perquisites at court.

CLITANDRE.

I see the cause of your chagrin, although from modesty you do not count yourself in the same category. Neither do I; and therefore I may ask: What have your lettered heroes done for the State? What service have their writings rendered, that they should now accuse the court of gross injustice and grumble everywhere that on their learned names it has not shed the favor of its gifts? Their learning is so requisite to France! The books they make assist the court so much! And yet their little brains, seeing themselves in print and bound in calf, conceive they are important to the State! They fancy

that their pen decides the fate of crowns; that pensions ought to swarm at the least sound of their productions; that everywhere their names are bathed in glory and the whole universe is gazing at them! They think that they are prodigies of knowledge for merely knowing what others have known and said before them, for simply using thirty years their eyes and ears, and spending a few thousand hours in mumbling Greek and Latin; stuffing their minds with musty spoils and shreds of knowledge left trailing round in books, — men who get drunk upon their learning, whose only gift is gabble; incompetent in all things, void of common-sense, full of absurdity and impudence which bring discredit upon intellect and science.

PHILAMINTE.

Your warmth is great; this vehemence of temper shows its cause. It is the name of rival that excites your soul.

SCENE FOURTH

TRISSOTIN, PHILAMINTE, CLITANDRE, ARMANDE, JULIEN

JULIEN, *to Philaminte.*

The learned gentleman who lately came to visit you — whose humble servant I have the honour to be — sends you this billet, madame, and begs that you will read it.

PHILAMINTE.

However important it may be that I should read it, learn, friend, that you commit an impropriety in thrusting yourself thus upon a company. You must have recourse to the domestics of the household in order to present yourself as befits a footman who knows the world.

JULIEN.

I will note that, madame, in my book.

PHILAMINTE, *reading.*

"Trissotin boasts that he will marry your daughter, madame; I warn you that his philosophy has an eye to your wealth. You would do well not to conclude this marriage until you have read the poem I am now composing against

him. While awaiting this sketch, in which I depict him in his true colors, I send you Horace, Virgil, Terence, and Catullus, in which you will find marginal notes showing the parts which he has pilfered." How many enemies attack the fame of one upon whose marriage I am now resolved! This last aggression prompts me to an act which shall confound the envious, and make them feel that all these efforts to break the match have only forced it on. (*To Julien*) Report this to your master, and say that, in order to let him know the value I place on his advice and how deserving I think it of being followed, I shall this evening marry Monsieur Trissotin to my daughter.

SCENE FIFTH

PHILAMINTE, ARMANDE, CLITANDRE

PHILAMINTE, *to Clitandre.*

Now, monsieur, as the friend of all the family you ought to sign the contract, and, for my part, I am happy to invite you. Armande, send for the notary, and notify your sister of this event.

ARMANDE.

I need not notify my sister; monsieur here will doubtless take upon himself the task of telling her this news, and prompting her heart to rebel against your will.

PHILAMINTE.

We shall see who has the greater power over her. I know the way to make her do her duty.

[*Exit.*

SCENE SIXTH

ARMANDE, CLITANDRE

ARMANDE.

I much regret, monsieur, that matters do not arrange themselves according to your wishes.

CLITANDRE.

But I shall strive with all my might, madame, to relieve your heart of that regret.

ARMANDE.

I fear your efforts will have no result.

CLITANDRE.

Perhaps you 'll find your fear delusive.

ARMANDE.

I wish I may!

CLITANDRE.

And I am sure of it; also that you will help my efforts.

ARMANDE.

Yes, I will serve you if I have the power.

CLITANDRE.

Such service will receive my utmost gratitude.

[*Exit.*

SCENE SEVENTH

CHRYSALE, ARISTE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE

CLITANDRE, *to Chrysale.*

If it were not for your support, monsieur, I should be most unhappy. Your wife rejects my suit; her heart is set on having Trissotin for son-in-law.

CHRYSALE.

What fancy is this she has got into her head? And why the devil should she want that Trissotin?

ARISTE.

Oh! for the fame he has in writing Latin verses; that gives him an advantage over rivals.

CLITANDRE.

She says the wedding must take place to-night.

CHRYSALE.

To-night!

CLITANDRE.

To-night.

CHRYSALE.

Then to-night I choose, in order to oppose her, that you shall marry Henriette.

CLITANDRE.

She has sent for the notary to draw the contract.

CHRYSALE.

I 'll make him draw the right one.

CLITANDRE, *motioning to Henriette.*

And Henriette's sister is ordered to inform her of this marriage to which she is commanded by her mother to give her heart.

CHRYSALE.

Then I command her, having full power, to give her hand to the alliance that I have chosen.

Ha! I 'll let them see if there is any master in this house but me who dares lay down the law. (*To Henriette*) Ariste and I will soon return; wait for us here. Come, brother, follow me; and you, too, son-in-law. [*Exit.*

HENRIETTE *to Ariste.*

For Heaven's sake, keep him to that mind.

ARISTE.

I will use every means to serve your love.

SCENE SEVENTH

HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE

CLITANDRE.

Whatever help they promise to my love, my solid hope is in your heart, madame.

HENRIETTE.

As for my heart, you may be well assured of that.

CLITANDRE.

I cannot but be happy if I have its aid.

HENRIETTE.

You see the bonds to which they would consign it.

CLITANDRE.

So long as it is mine, there 's nothing I can fear.

HENRIETTE.

I will do all I can for our dear hopes, and if my efforts fail to give me to you, there is a refuge where our souls can meet, where I cannot belong to any other man.

CLITANDRE.

May a just Heaven preserve me from the day when I must take from you that proof of love.

END OF FOURTH ACT.

Act Fifth

SCENE I

HENRIETTE, TRISSOTIN

HENRIETTE.

IT is about this marriage for which my mother is preparing that I have wished, monsieur, to speak to you in private; for I believe that in this trouble that has come into our household, I may be able to make you listen to reason. You expect, I know, a dowry with my hand; but money, of which so many people think so much, must have a paltry charm for true philosophy; contempt for wealth and empty grandeurs will not express itself in you by words alone.

TRISSOTIN.

Such things are not the charms I find in you. Your bright attractions, your soft shining eyes, your grace, your air, — those are the riches that have won my love and all my tenderness; those are the only treasures for which I long.

HENRIETTE.

I am most grateful for your generous passion; so courteous a love may well confound me, and I regret, indeed, that I cannot respond to it. I do esteem you with as much esteem as can be given; but an obstacle prevents my loving you. A heart, you know, cannot be shared; and I feel that mine owns Clitandre for its master. I know his merits are far less than yours, and that my choice of husband proves I have no eyes; I know that with a hundred splendid talents you ought to please me. I see that I am wrong, and yet — I cannot help it; and all the common-sense I have is to reproach myself for so much blindness.

TRISSOTIN.

The bestowal of your hand, for which I have been led to hope, will give to me the heart you say Clitandre possesses. A thousand tender cares I may presume will find the art of teaching you to love me.

HENRIETTE.

No, my soul is fastened to its first attachment; no care, no tenderness of yours can move

it. I venture to explain this frankly, and my avowal ought not, I think, to wound you. The glow of love that rises in the heart is not, we know, the effect of merit. Fancy has part in it, and when a lover pleases us we are often at a loss to say just why it is. If people loved by wisdom's choice, my heart and tenderness, monsieur, would all be yours. But love, you see, rules otherwise. Leave me, I entreat you, to my blindness; and do not take advantage of the constraint my mother places — for your sake — on my obedience. An honorable man will never owe his wife to the mere power of her parents. To such a man it is repugnant to immolate a being whom he loves; he wants no heart that does not give itself. I beg you not to drive my mother to exercise the rigor of her rights upon my wishes. Withdraw your love; carry elsewhere the homage of a heart so precious.

TRISSOTIN.

How shall that heart content you? Impose upon it tasks that it can execute. To cease to love you is impossible, unless you cease, madame, to be so lovable, and hide those heavenly charms from every eye.

HENRIETTE.

Ah, monsieur, pray! a truce to these fine speeches. You have so many Irises[1] and Phillises and Amaranthes, whom you describe in charming verses and for whom you vow a passionate ardor —

TRISSOTIN.

My intellect does that, but not my heart; I love them only as a poet loves, but Henriette I love to adoration.

HENRIETTE.

For Heaven's sake, monsieur —

TRISSOTIN.

Though I offend you, my offence can never cease. My passion, hitherto ignored by you, now vows itself to your eternal service; nothing can quench its transports, and, however much your charms reject my efforts, I cannot refuse the assistance of a mother who promises to crown a love so dear. Provided I obtain this precious happiness, provided you are mine, I care for naught.

[1] Cotin had sung the praises of a number of court-ladies under the names of Iris, Phillis, and Amaranthe. — AIMÉ-MARTIN.

HENRIETTE.

But do you know that you risk more than you may think by using violence upon a heart? You are not so sure of any happiness — to put it plainly — in marrying a girl against her will. Finding herself constrained, she might resort to certain resentments that a husband well may fear.

TRISSOTIN.

Such speeches cannot change me; a wise man is prepared for all events. Cured by his mental powers of vulgar weakness he holds himself above all base affairs; he feels no shadow of annoyance at things that do not touch himself.

HENRIETTE.

Ah, you enrapture me! I little thought philosophy could be so noble, or that it taught the human being to bear his troubles thus. Such strength of mind, such firmness of the soul, peculiar to yourself, deserves illustrious chance to show itself; and as, to tell the truth, I dare not think myself the fittest person to set such glory in its full relief, I leave that duty to some other woman, and swear, between ourselves, that I renounce the blessing of making you my husband.

TRISSOTIN, *leaving the room.*

Well, we shall soon see how this thing will end; the notary is already in the house.

SCENE SECOND

CHRYSALE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, MARTINE

CHRYSALE.

Ah! my daughter, I am glad to see you. Come, do your duty, and submit your wishes to your father's will! I desire, I intend to teach your mother how to behave; and to begin by braving her, though she may show her teeth, I 've brought back Martine, whom I reinstate.

HENRIETTE.

That 's a resolution worthy of all praise. Take care, dear father, that it does not change. Be firm in willing what you wish, and do not be misled by your own kindness. Don't give way; contrive to prevent my mother from getting the better of you.

CHRYSALE.

What! do you take me for a ninny?

HENRIETTE.

Heaven forbid!

CHRYSALE.

Am I a simpleton, if you please?

HENRIETTE.

I never said so.

CHRYSALE.

Am I thought incapable of the firmness of a man of sense?

HENRIETTE.

No, father.

CHRYSALE.

At my age have n't I spirit enough to be master in my own house?

HENRIETTE.

Oh, yes, you have!

CHRYSALE.

Am I so weak in soul that I allow my wife to lead me by the nose?

HENRIETTE.

Why, no, father, no!

CHRYSALE.

Yah! then what's the meaning of all this? I think you are very saucy to talk in this way.

HENRIETTE.

If I offended you, I did not mean to.

CHRYSALE.

My will is to be done in this house.

HENRIETTE.

So be it, father.

CHRYSALE.

And no one, but myself, has the right to give commands.

HENRIETTE.

Yes, that is wise.

CHRYSALE.

'T is I who stand as the head of this family.

HENRIETTE.

Agreed.

CHRYSALE.

And it is my duty to dispose as I choose of my daughter.

HENRIETTE.

Yes, yes!

CHRYSALE.

Heaven has given me full power over her.

HENRIETTE.

Who said the contrary?

CHRYSALE.

And in taking a husband I would have you understand it is your father, and not your mother, whom it is your duty to obey.

HENRIETTE.

Ah me! that order suits my dearest hopes; let me obey you, that is all I want.

CHRYSALE.

We shall see if my wife will dare rebel against my wishes.

CLITANDRE.

Here she comes now, bringing the notary.

CHRYSALE.

Stand by me, all of you.

MARTINE.

Trust me for that; I'll be certain to encourage you, if need be.

SCENE THIRD

PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, TRISSOTIN, A NOTARY, CHRYSALE, CLITANDRE, HENRIETTE, MARTINE

PHILAMINTE, *to the Notary.*

Can you not change your brutal legal style and draw this contract in a nobler language?

NOTARY.

Our style is very good; and I should be a fool, madame, to change a single word of it.

BÉLISE.

Ah! what barbarism in the heart of France! But at least, as a tribute to knowledge, monsieur, be so good as to write the dowry in minas and talents, instead of crowns and francs; and date the contract by the ides and kalends.

NOTARY.

I! If I agreed to your request, madame, I should be hooted by my legal friends.

PHILAMINTE.

'Tis useless to complain of this uncouthness. Come, monsieur, seat yourself here, at this table, and begin to write. (*Perceiving Mar-*

[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [

NOTARY.

Two husbands? That is one too many for our customs.

PHILAMINTE, *to Notary.*

Why do you delay? Write, write, I say, the name of Monsieur Trissotin, my son-in-law.

CHRYSALE.

Write for *my* son-in-law, write, I say, the name of Monsieur Clitandre.

NOTARY.

Agree among yourselves, and with deliberate judgment choose your son-in-law

PHILAMINTE.

Follow my orders, monsieur; do the thing I choose.

CHRYSALE.

Monsieur, you are to do the thing I tell you.

NOTARY.

But tell me first which of you two I must obey.

PHILAMINTE, *to Chrysale.*

What! you oppose the things I wish!

CHRYSALE.

I will not suffer my daughter to be wooed for love of money.

PHILAMINTE.

Pooh! who thinks about your money here? A fine solicitude indeed for wisdom and philosophy!

CHRYSALE.

Well, for her husband, I have chosen Clitandre.

PHILAMINTE, *pointing to Trissotin.*

I, for her husband, have selected this man. My choice is fixed; it will be followed; that 's resolved upon.

CHRYSALE.

Heyday! that 's a top-lofty tone you take.

MARTINE.

'T ain't for a woman to command; and I 'm for yielding the top place in everything to men.

CHRYSALE.

That 's well said.

MARTINE.

Though I get turned away again, I 'll say it, — the hen may n't crow before the cock.

CHRYSALE.

No, no!

MARTINE.

And every man is jeered at when the wife at home is seen to wear the breeches.

CHRYSALE.

That is true.

MARTINE.

If I 'd a husband — and I say it now — I 'd make him be the master of the house. I could n't love him if he played the puppet; and if I argued with him — just to make a fuss — and raised my voice, I 'd think it right that he should box my ears and bring me down a peg.

CHRYSALE.

That 's talking as you should.

MARTINE.

Monsieur has shown his sense in choosing a good husband for his daughter.

CHRYSALE.

Yes.

MARTINE.

Then why refuse her to him, he being young and mightily well-made? and why, if you

please, consign her to a learned man who carps and chides at everything? She wants a husband, not a pedagogue. Not knowing Greek or Latin, what need has she of Monsieur Trissotin?

CHRYSALE.

You say well.

PHILAMINTE.

How long is this hussy to chatter as she likes?

MARTINE.

Pedants are only good for preaching; and for my husband — I 've said it a thousand times — I 'll never take a man with mind. Mind is no good in household matters; books don't square with marriage. If ever I bind myself for life I mean to get a husband who wants no book but me, — a man who don't know A from B, and, begging your pardon, madame, can't preach to any one except his wife.

PHILAMINTE, *to Chrysale.*

Has she finished? Pray, have I listened long enough to your most worthy mouthpiece?

CHRYSALE.

She tells the truth.

PHILAMINTE.

Well, to cut short the whole dispute at once, my wishes will now be executed. (*Motioning to Trissotin*) Henriette and Monsieur Trissotin will now be joined. I have said it, and I will it; make me no reply. If you have given your word to Clitandre offer him the chance of marrying your eldest daughter.

CHRYSALE.

Ah! that indeed would settle the affair. (*To Henriette and Clitandre*) Come, will you both consent to that?

HENRIETTE.

Oh, father!

CLITANDRE.

Hey, monsieur!

BÉLISE.

There is another proposition which might please him better; but the sort of love we strive to introduce should be as pure as the great orb of day; substance that thinks may be admitted there, but we must banish that which is material.

SCENE FOURTH

Ariste, Chrysale, Philaminte, Bélise, Henriette, Armande, Trissotin, a Notary, Clitandre, Martine

Ariste.

I grieve to trouble the joy of this occasion by painful news which I am forced to bring. Here are two letters, making me the bearer of tidings which I feel will hurt you cruelly. (*To Philaminte*) One is for you, from your solicitor. (*To Chrysale*) The other, for you, was sent to me from Lyon.

Philaminte.

What evil can be capable of troubling us?

Ariste.

That letter tells of one, if you will read it.

Philaminte, *reading.*

"Madame, I have asked your brother to hand you this letter, which will tell you something I am unwilling to say to you in person. The great neglect with which you have treated your affairs is the reason why the clerk of your attorney failed to give me due notice of your case, which you have now irrevocably lost, although you would otherwise have won it."

CHRYSALE, *to Philaminte.*

Your law-suit lost!

PHILAMINTE, *to Chrysale.*

You trouble yourself mightily! my heart is nowise shaken by the blow. Show a less vulgar soul, and face, like me, the shafts of fortune. (*Reads*) "This neglect will cost you forty thousand crowns, which sum you are condemned, by judgment of the court, to pay, with costs." Condemned! oh, what a shocking word! it properly applies to none but criminals.

ARISTE.

Yes, you are right in that objection; your solicitor is wrong. He should have said, "You are requested by a judgment of the court to pay the sum of forty thousand francs, with costs, immediately."

PHILAMINTE.

Let us read the other letter.

CHRYSALE, *reading.*

"Monsieur, the friendship that binds me to your brother induces me to take an interest in what concerns you. I know that you have put your property into the hands of Damon and of

Argante, and I now feel bound to inform you of their bankruptcy." Good heavens! to lose my property, my whole property, in this way!

PHILAMINTE.

Ah, how shameful your emotion! Fie! such things are nothing; there can be no reverses for a wise man; in losing all he still retains himself. Let us conclude the matter now in hand, and relinquish your anxiety. The property of monsieur (*motioning to Trissotin*) will suffice for all of us.

TRISSOTIN.

No, madame, cease to urge this marriage; I see that every one opposes it, and I am not inclined to put constraint on others.

PHILAMINTE.

That thought has come to you quite suddenly; it follows pretty closely our misfortune.

TRISSOTIN.

So much resistance wearies me at last; I much prefer to renounce all this embarrassment. I want no heart that is not given willingly.

PHILAMINTE.

I see, I plainly see in you, and not to your honor, that which I have till now refused to credit.

TRISSOTIN.

You may see in me all you please; I care but little how you take me. But I am not a man to bear the rebuffs with which I am insulted in this house. My worth is such that I must be more prized, and I now bid farewell to those who do not want me. [*Exit.*

SCENE FIFTH

ARISTE, CHRYSALE, PHILAMINTE, BÉLISE, ARMANDE, HENRIETTE, CLITANDRE, A NOTARY, MARTINE

PHILAMINTE.

He has well disclosed his mercenary soul! How little true philosophy there is in what he does!

CLITANDRE.

I do not boast of being a philosopher, but I desire to ally myself, madame, to all your fortunes; and I make bold to offer you, with my person, the worldly goods which fate has granted me.

PHILAMINTE.

You charm me, monsieur, by this generous offer. I wish to crown your amorous desires, and I give Henriette to the ardent love —

HENRIETTE.

No, mother, no; my thoughts are changed. Permit me to resist your wishes.

CLITANDRE.

What! do you now oppose my happiness? and when the rest yield to my love, do you —

HENRIETTE.

I know how little property you have, Clitandre; and I have always wished you for my husband because the satisfaction of my dearest hopes would also benefit your worldly interests. But now that fate has proved so contrary, I cherish you too much to let you bear the burden of our adversity.

CLITANDRE.

But any fate with you is enviable; without you, every fate is unendurable.

HENRIETTE.

Love in its ardor ever speaks in that way. Let us avoid the sorrow of a change of feeling. Nothing wears out the fervor of this tie that binds us like wretched cares about the things of life. Often a married pair accuse each other of having caused the griefs which follow such a love.

ARISTE, *to Henriette.*

Is this the only reason why you refuse a marriage with Clitandre?

HENRIETTE.

Without it you would see my heart bound toward him. I flee his love that I may bless him more.

ARISTE.

Then let yourself be bound in chains so noble. The news I brought was false. I used a stratagem, a crafty succor, which I invented to promote your love, and undeceive my sister by making known what her philosopher would prove to be when tested.

CHRYSALE.

Now Heaven be praised!

PHILAMINTE.

Well, I am glad at heart for the regret that cowardly deserter now will feel. The punishment of his base avarice will be to see the splendor with which this marriage shall be celebrated.

CHRYSALE, *to Clitandre.*

I knew quite well that you would marry her.

ARMANDE, *to Philaminte.*

Why have you sacrificed me to their happiness?

PHILAMINTE.

I do not sacrifice you; you have the strength of true philosophy to see their marriage with contented eyes.

BÉLISE.

Let him beware lest love for me lurks in his heart. Often a sharp despair prompts men to marriage which they repent through all their lives.

CHRYSALE, *to the Notary.*

Come, monsieur, obey the order that I gave you, and draw the contract as I said you should.

END OF LES FEMMES SAVANTES.

LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE

(THE IMAGINARY SICK MAN)

Comedy

IN THREE ACTS

PERSONAGES

OF THE COMEDY

ARGAN . . . . . *Malade imaginaire.*

[He is dressed as an invalid,—thick stockings, slippers, narrow breeches, red bed-gown with lace, neckcloth with old trimmings, loosely tied, night-cap with a frill of lace.]

BÉLINE . . . . . *Second wife of Argan.*

ANGÉLIQUE . . . . *Daughter of Argan, beloved by Cléante.*

LOUISON . . . . . *Youngest daughter of Argan, a child.*

BÉRALDE . . . . . *Argan's brother; dressed in plain riding-clothes.*

CLÉANTE . . . . . *Suitor to Angélique; dressed gallantly, like a lover.*

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS . *Physician.*

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS . *His son, suitor to Angélique.*

MONSIEUR PURGON . *Argan's doctor.*

[These three latter personages are dressed in black, with the usual coat of a physician, except Thomas Diafoirus, whose coat has a long, plain collar; his hair is long and worn flat; his cloak comes below his knees; his air and manner are altogether silly.]

MONSIEUR FLEURANT. *Apothecary; dressed in black or dark brown; wears a short napkin in front of him, and carries a syringe in his hand. Has no hat.*

MONSIEUR BONNEFOI. *Notary.*

TOINETTE . . . . . *Servant-woman.*

OF THE PROLOGUE

FLORA.

TWO ZEPHYRS . . . . . *Dancing.*

CLIMÈNE, DAPHNE . . . . . *Milkmaids.*

TYRCIS . . . . . *Lover of Climène; head of a troop of shepherds.*

DORILAS . . . . . *Lover of Daphne; head of a troop of shepherds.*

SHEPHERDS AND MILKMAIDS *Dancing.*

PAN.

FAUNS . . . . . *Dancing.*

OF THE CEREMONY

UPHOLSTERERS . *Dancing.*

THE PRESIDENT OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY.

DOCTORS.

ARGAN . . . . *Candidate for admission to the Medical Faculty.*

APOTHECARIES . *with their pestles and mortars.*

MEDICAL STUDENTS.

SURGEONS.

The Scene is in Paris.

PROLOGUE

AFTER the glorious toils and victorious exploits of our august monarch, it is just and proper that all persons concerned in writing should employ themselves either in praising him or in providing for his amusement. That is what we have here tried to do; this prologue is an offer of praise to that great prince, while it opens the way to the comedy of "Le Malade Imaginaire" the purpose of which is to refresh and divert him after his noble labors.

The stage represents a sylvan scene, which is, nevertheless, very pleasing.

ECLOGUE

In Music and Verse

SCENE FIRST

FLORA, TWO ZEPHYRS, *dancing*

FLORA.

Quit, quit your flocks,
Come shepherds! milkmaids, come!
Haste, haste beneath the feathery elms;
I have some news most dear to tell you,
News to rejoice the hamlet.
Come shepherds! milkmaids come!
Leave, leave your flocks,
And hasten hither 'neath these tender elms.

SCENE SECOND

FLORA, TWO ZEPHYRS, *dancing;* CLIMÈNE, DAPHNE, TYRCIS, DORILAS

CLIMÈNE, *to Tyrcis;* DAPHNÉ, *to Dorilas.*

Come, leave this dallying and away!
'T is Flora calls us!

TYRCIS, *to Climène;* DORILAS, *to Daphné.*

But, tell me first, my cruel one.

TYRCIS.

If with a little love you 'll pay my suit?

DORILAS.

If you are touched by my most faithful ardor.

CLIMÈNE *and* DAPHNÉ.

'T is Flora calls us!

TYRCIS *and* DORILAS.

Yes, but a word, a word, a single word I want.

TYRCIS.

Must I still languish in this mortal pain?

DORILAS.

May I not hope that you will make me happy?

CLIMENE *and* DAPHNÉ.

Hark! Flora calls us.

SCENE THIRD

FLORA, TWO ZEPHYRS, *dancing:* CLIMÈNE, DAPHNÉ, TYRCIS, DORILAS; SHEPHERDS *and* MILKMAIDS, *dancing*

The troop of shepherds and milkmaids place themselves around Flora, keeping time to the music.

CLIMÈNE.

Goddess, what news will cast this joy among us?

DAPHNÉ.

Our hearts are fired to learn of you
This wondrous news.

DORILAS.

We sigh to hear it.

CLIMÈNE, DAPHNÉ, TYRCIS, DORILAS.

We die to know it.

FLORA.

'Tis this — hush! silence! silence!
Your prayers are heard, LOUIS returns,
Pleasures and love attend him;
Your mortal fears are past and gone,
The mighty exploits of his arm
Have won subjection.
He sheathes his sword
For lack of foes.

CHORUS.

Ah! what choice news,
How noble! how majestic!
What pleasures, laughter, games and joy!
What glad successes!
Lo! heaven itself hath blessed our hopes!
Ah! what choice news!
How noble! how majestic!

All the shepherds and the milkmaids express in dancing the transports of their joy.

FLORA.

Waken the sweetest tones
Of sylvan flutes;
LOUIS bestows upon your songs
The noblest subject.
After great conflicts where his arm
Hath gathered ample victory
Raise other rivalries among yourselves,
Fight gentler fights
To chant his glory.

CHORUS.

Raise other rivalries among ourselves,
Fight gentler fights
To chant his glory.

FLORA.

My youthful lover in
These sylvan shades
Prepares a prize for him whose voice
Shall sing the best,
In vibrant tones,
The virtues and the great exploits
Of our most august king.

CLIMÈNE.

If Tyrcis wins the prize —

DAPHNÉ.

If Dorilas is victor —

CLIMÈNE.

I pledge myself to love him.

DAPHNÉ.

I'll yield me to his ardor.

TYRCIS.

Oh, dearest hope!

DORILAS.

Oh, words of sweetness!

TYRCIS *and* DORILAS.

Could dearer hope, could nobler recompense,
Inspire our song?

The violins play an air to animate the two shepherds to the contest, while Flora, as judge, stands, with two Zephyrs, at the foot of a fine tree in the centre of the scene, and the rest, as spectators, place themselves on either side of her.

TYRCIS.

When melting snows swell some great torrent,
Against the effort of their foaming flood,
Naught can resist;
Dike, castle, town and wood,
Men, flocks, that once withstood,
Yield to the current of the flood.
So, but with greater pride,
And more resistless,
LOUIS moves onward with his valorous stride.

The shepherds and the milkmaids on Tyrcis' side dance round him to a ritornello, in order to express their applause.

DORILAS.

The savage lightning which with fury rends
The awful darkness of the thunder-cloud,
Makes the firm heart, that seldom bends,
Tremble with horror.
But at the head of mighty hosts
LOUIS spreads terror.

The shepherds and milkmaids on the side of Dorilas do to him as did the others to Tyrcis.

TYRCIS.

The fabled exploits praised in Grecian song
Are dimmed forever by the brilliant throng
Of actual exploits done by him we prize;
For all those famous demi-gods,
Lauded by history to the skies,
Are nothing to our thoughts and minds,
Like LOUIS to our eyes.

The shepherds and milkmaids on the side of Tyrcis do the same thing again.

DORILAS.

LOUIS, the Victor, by his mighty deeds,
Makes men of our day trust the screeds
Of vanished centuries;
But our descendants in their greatest glory
Will find no reason to believe the story
Of LOUIS's victories.

The shepherds and milkmaids on the side of Dorilas do as before.

Then the shepherds and milkmaids on both sides mingle and dance together.

SCENE FOURTH

FLORA, PAN; TWO ZEPHYRS, *dancing;* CLIMÈNE, DAPHNÉ, TYRCIS, DORILAS; FAUNS, *dancing; shepherds and milkmaids singing and dancing*

PAN.

Quit, quit, my shepherds, this ambitious scheme;
Hey! what seek you?
To sing upon your reedy pipes
That which Apollo on his lyre
Dares not pretend to tell?
'T is soaring high upon your inward fires,
'T is rising to the skies on wings of wax,
Only to drop into the depths.

To sing of LOUIS'S high intrepid courage
There is no voice on earth;
No words are grand enough to trace its image;
Silence alone has power to express
His glorious deeds.
Seek other ways to celebrate his victory;
He needs no praise of yours to swell his fame.
Cease, cease to sing his glory,
Think only of his joy.

CHORUS.

Cease, cease to sing his glory,
Think only of his joy.

FLORA, *to Tyrcis and Dorilas.*

Although to praise your king's immortal virtues
Your powers have proved too weak,
You yet shall win the prize for which you strove;

In great and noble things
It is enough
That men have striven.

The two Zephyrs dance with crowns of flowers in their hands, which, at the close of their dance, they lay upon the shepherds' heads.

CLIMÈNE AND DAPHNÉ, *giving their hands to Tyrcis and Dorilas.*

In great and noble things
It is enough
That men have striven.

TYRCIS AND DORILAS.

Ah! what sweet triumph follows our endeavor!

FLORA AND PAN.

That which is done for LOUIS never faileth.

CLIMÈNE, DAPHNÉ, TYRCIS, DORILAS.

We give ourselves forever to his joy.

FLORA AND PAN.

Happy, happy, happy those who give their lives to him!

CHORUS.

Come, let us join beneath these sylvan shades,
Ye men and maids,
Our flutes and voices;

And make the echoes cry a thousand times,
Louis our king, Louis our king
Is greatest upon earth!
And happy, happy, happy those
Who give their lives to him!

Fauns, shepherds, and milkmaids mingle toegther in the dance; after which they go to prepare for the comedy.

END OF FIRST PROLOGUE

ANOTHER PROLOGUE

SCENE.

A Milkmaid, *singing.*

Your vaunted knowledge is a pure delusion,
Oh, vain and foolish Faculty;
You cannot cure with Latin words
The anguish that besets me.
Your vaunted knowledge is a pure delusion.
Alas, alas! I dare not tell
My loving martyrdom
To him for whom I sigh and long.
'T is he alone can cure my ill;
You cannot do it, foolish doctors,
You know not how.
Your vaunted knowledge is a mere delusion.

Those learned remedies — which simple folk
Believe that you believe have healing power —
For all the ills I feel have nothing helpful;
And your wise dicta are received by none
But him whose ailments are imaginary.
Your vaunted knowledge is a pure delusion
Oh, vain, unlearned doctors.

The scene changes and represents a bedroom.

LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE

Act First

SCENE FIRST

ARGAN, *seated, a table before him, figuring up with counters the items of his apothecary's bill.*

THREE and two are five, and five are ten, and ten are twenty; three and two are five. "Item: on the 24th one small enema, emollient and preparative, to cool, moisten, and soften monsieur's intestines." What I like about my apothecary, Monsieur Fleurant, is that his bills are always very civil,—"monsieur's intestines, thirty sous." Yes, but, Monsieur Fleurant, it is n't enough to be civil, you should be reasonable, and not fleece sick men. Thirty sous for an injection! Thank you, no, not I! I 've

told you so already. In the other bills they are down at twenty sous, and twenty sous in the language of apothecaries means ten — there they are, ten sous. "Item: same day, one strong, detergent clyster, composed of an electuary of senna and rhubarb, honey of roses, and other things according to prescription, to wash out and cleanse monsieur's lower bowels, thirty sous." With your permission, ten sous. "Item: same day, at night, one julep, hepatic, soporific, and somniferous, for monsieur's sleeping-draught, thirty-five sous." I don't complain of that. for it made me sleep finely. Ten, fifteen, sixteen, and seventeen sous, six farthings. "Item: on the 25th, one mixture, corroborant and purgative, composed of fresh cassia-leaves, Egyptian senna, and other things according to the prescription of Monsieur Purgon, to expel and evacuate monsieur's bile, four francs." Oh! Monsieur Fleurant, that 's ridiculous; sick men must live, as well as others. Monsieur Purgon never prescribed that you should charge four francs. Put three, if you please. Twenty and thirty sous. "Item: same day, one potion, sedative and astringent, to cause monsieur to rest, thirty sous." Very good; ten and fifteen sous. "Item: on the 26th, one carminative

enema, to eject monsieur's wind, thirty sous." Ten sous, Monsieur Fleurant. "Item: monsieur's enema as above, repeated at night, thirty sous." Monsieur Fleurant, ten sous. "Item: on the 27th, one black draught, to stir up and bring to the surface monsieur's humor, three francs." Good! I'm glad that 's reasonable; twenty and thirty sous. "Item: on the 28th, one dose of milk whey, to cool, lenify, and temper monsieur's blood, twenty sous." Pooh! ten sous. "Item: one preservative cordial, composed of twelve grains of benzoate, syrup of lemon and pomegranates, and other things according to prescription, five francs." Ah! Monsieur Fleurant, gently, gently! If you treat a patient like that he won't want to be ill. Content yourself with four francs. Twenty and forty sous. Three and two are five, and five are ten, and ten are twenty. Sixty-three francs, four sous, six farthings. So it appears that I have taken this month one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, and eight doses; and one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, and twelve injections. Last month there were twelve medicines and twenty injections. It 's no wonder I don't feel as well this month as I did last. I must speak to Monsieur

Purgon about it, so that he may put the matter right at once. Here, somebody! come and take these things away. (*Nobody comes, and he sees there is no servant in the room.*) Why! there 's nobody here! No matter what I tell them, they persist in leaving me alone. Is there no way of keeping them about me? (*Rings a bell that is on the table.*) They don't even hear that; a bell can't make noise enough! Ring a ling, a ling. No good at all. Ring a ling, a ling, a ling, a ling. They 're deaf. Toinette! Ring a ling, a ling. Just as if I did n't ring at all! Slut! hussy! Ring a ling, a ling, a ling, a ling. I 'm furious. (*Stops ringing, but screams.*) Ring a ling, a ling, a ling, a ling. The devil take her, that jade! Is it possible that they can leave a poor sick man alone like this? Ring a ling, a ling. It's pitiable! Ring a ling, a ling. My God, they 've left me here to die! Ring a ling, a ling.

SCENE SECOND

ARGAN, TOINETTE

TOINETTE, *entering.*

I 'm coming.

ARGAN.

Ah! you slut, you jade —

TOINETTE, *pretending to have struck her head.*

Aië! The deuce of your impatience! you hurry people so I 've gone and knocked my head against the edge of that shutter. Aië!

ARGAN.

You treacherous thing —

TOINETTE, *interrupting him.*

Aië!

ARGAN.

It is a —

TOINETTE.

Aië.

ARGAN.

It 's a whole hour —

TOINETTE.

Aië!

ARGAN.

Since you left me —

TOINETTE.

Aië!

ARGAN.

Stop screaming, you hussy; and let me scold you.

TOINETTE.

Faith, I like that! after what you 've made me do.

ARGAN.

You have made me shout myself hoarse.

TOINETTE.

And you 've made me crack my head, yes, that you have; one hurt for another. Call it quits if you like.

ARGAN.

What! you vixen —

TOINETTE.

If you scold me I 'll cry.

ARGAN.

To leave me in this way —

TOINETTE, *interrupting him.*

Oh-h!

ARGAN.

Do you mean, you slut —

TOINETTE.

Oh-h!

ARGAN.

So! I can't even have the pleasure of quarrelling with her!

TOINETTE.

Quarrel to your heart's content; I don't care.

ARGAN.

But you prevent it, you hussy, by interrupting me.

TOINETTE.

If you are to have the enjoyment of quarrelling, I must have that of crying. Every one his own pleasure, — and that 's not so much either. Oh-h!

ARGAN.

Come, come, I 'll overlook it. Take these things away now, you vixen; here, take them off. Stop, did my injection operate properly?

TOINETTE.

Your injection?

ARGAN.

Yes; did I get rid of the bile?

TOINETTE.

Faith! I don't meddle with such matters. Monsieur Fleurant can poke his nose into them if he chooses — he pockets the profits.

ARGAN.

Be sure that the broth is ready for the next thing I have to take.

TOINETTE.

This Monsieur Fleurant, and Monsieur Purgon too, do have a fine time over your body. They know they 've got hold of a good milch cow. I 'd like to ask them what is really the matter with you to want such a lot of remedies.

ARGAN.

Hold your tongue, ignoramus. It is n't for you to question a doctor's orders. Send my daughter Angélique to me; I want to speak to her.

TOINETTE.

Here she comes of herself; she must have guessed your want.

SCENE THIRD

ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE

ARGAN.

Here, Angélique; you have come just in time. I want to speak to you.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And I am ready to listen.

ARGAN.

Wait. (*To Toinette*) Give me my stick. I 'll be back presently.

TOINETTE.

Make haste, monsieur. Monsieur Fleurant gives you plenty to do.

SCENE FOURTH

ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE

ANGÉLIQUE.

Toinette!

TOINETTE.

What is it?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Look at me.

TOINETTE.

So I do.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Toinette!

TOINETTE.

Well, what, with your Toinettes?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Can't you guess what I want to say to you?

TOINETTE.

Of course I can; it is about that young lover, for it is over a week that you've talked of nothing else; you are not happy if you're not talking of him the whole time.

ANGÉLIQUE.

If you think so you ought to be the first to speak of him to me. Why don't you spare me the embarrassment of beginning such talk?

TOINETTE.

You did n't give me time; and you have worries about it that I can't relieve.

ANGÉLIQUE.

I admit I 'm never tired of talking of him, and that my heart takes eager advantage of every minute when I can speak to you. Tell me, Toinette, do you think me to blame for feeling as I do about him?

TOINETTE.

No, I don't think so.

ANGÉLIQUE.

But am I wrong in yielding to these sweet impressions?

TOINETTE.

I never said so.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Would you have me insensible to the tender protestations of the ardent passion he evinces for me?

TOINETTE.

God forbid!

ANGÉLIQUE.

But tell me this: do you not see as I do something of heaven, a touch of destiny, in the unlooked for circumstances of our first acquaintance?

TOINETTE.

Yes.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And don't you think his act in taking my defence without even knowing me was that of an honorable man?

TOINETTE.

Yes.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And could he now behave more generously?

TOINETTE.

Certainly not.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Did he not do the whole thing with charming grace?

TOINETTE.

Indeed he did.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And don't you think, Toinette, that his person is very well made?

TOINETTE.

Assuredly.

ANGÉLIQUE.

That his air and manner are the finest in the world?

TOINETTE.

Undoubtedly.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And that his speeches, like his actions, have something noble in them?

TOINETTE.

Indeed they have.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Could I ever hear anything more impassioned than what he says to me?

TOINETTE.

Indeed you could n't.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And can there be anything more trying than the restraint under which they keep me; which silences the soft effusion of a mutual love that Heaven inspires?

TOINETTE.

No; you are right.

ANGÉLIQUE.

But, my poor Toinette, do you think he really loves me as much as he declares?

TOINETTE.

Well, you know these matters require caution. Love's grimaces look mighty like the true thing. I've seen great comedians play them.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Oh, Toinette! what a thing to say! After the manner in which he spoke to me can it be possible that he did not speak the truth?

TOINETTE.

At any rate you'll soon find out; and his resolve, of which he wrote you yesterday, to ask your hand in marriage is a sure means by which you'll know whether he's true or not. That's a good test.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Oh, Toinette! if he deceives me I'll never trust another man on earth.

TOINETTE.

Here comes your father.

SCENE FIFTH

ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE

ARGAN.

Ah! here, my daughter, I want to tell you a piece of news which perhaps you don't expect. You are asked in marriage — What's all this? Why do you laugh! Oh! yes, 't is mighty pleasant, that word "marriage;" girls think there 's nothing more jocose. Ah, nature, nature! By what I see, my dear, I think that I need only ask if you are willing to be married.

ANGÉLIQUE.

I ought to do as you see fit to order me, father.

ARGAN.

I 'm very glad I have so tractable a daughter. The thing is therefore settled; your hand is pledged.

ANGÉLIQUE.

I shall follow blindly all your wishes.

ARGAN.

My wife, your stepmother, wishes me to make you a nun, and your little sister, Louison, as well; in fact, she has long been obstinately bent upon it.

TOINETTE, *aside.*

You silly fool! she has her reasons.

ARGAN.

She refused her consent to this marriage at first; but I got the better of her, and my word is given.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Ah! father, how thankful I am to you for all your kindness.

TOINETTE, *to Argan.*

Yes, and I praise you for it, too; you never did a better action in all your life.

ARGAN.

I have not yet seen the gentleman; but they say I shall be pleased with him, — and you, too.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Assuredly I shall, father.

ARGAN.

What! have you seen him?

ANGÉLIQUE.

As your consent enables me to open my heart to you, I will not hesitate to say that chance

threw us together about six days ago, and the request which he has made to you is the result of the inclination which from the very first we have felt for each other.

ARGAN.

They did not tell me that. However, I am very glad of it. 'T is much better that things should come about in that may. They tell me he is a tall young fellow, and well-made.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Yes, father.

ARGAN.

A fine figure.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Yes, indeed.

ARGAN.

Agreeable in person.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Most assuredly.

ARGAN.

Good countenance.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Very good.

ARGAN.

Well-behaved and well-born.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Oh! yes, altogether, father.

ARGAN.

Extremely honorable.

ANGÉLIQUE.

The most honorable man in the world.

ARGAN.

Talks Latin and Greek.

ANGÉLIQUE.

I don't know about that.

ARGAN.

Takes his degree of doctor in three or four days.

ANGÉLIQUE.

He, father?

ARGAN.

Yes, did n't he tell you so?

ANGÉLIQUE.

No, indeed. Who told you?

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Does Monsieur Purgon know him?

ARGAN.

What a question! Why he must know his own nephew.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Cléante the nephew of Monsieur Purgon?

ARGAN.

What Cléante? Are not we talking of the man who has asked you in marriage?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Yes! oh, yes, father.

ARGAN.

Very well, then! he is the nephew of Monsieur Purgon, — the son, that is, of his brother-in-law, the doctor, Monsieur Diafoirus; and this son is named Thomas Diafoirus, and not Cléante at all. We settled about the marriage this morning, Monsieur Purgon, Monsieur Fleurant and I; and to-morrow my son-in-law is to be brought here by his father. Well, what's the matter? You look astounded.

ANGÉLIQUE.

The matter is, father, that I find you've been speaking of one person while I meant another.

TOINETTE.

Why, monsieur! you can't have made such a foolish plan? With all the property you have, you surely don't mean to marry your daughter to a doctor?

ARGAN.

I do mean it. Why do you meddle, you hussy, — saucy thing that you are?

TOINETTE.

Come, come, gently! You are always rushing into abuse. Can't we reason together without your getting angry? There, now talk coolly. What reason have you, if you please, for such a marriage?

ARGAN.

My reason is that, being so infirm and sickly as I am, I want a son-in-law and connections who are doctors, so as to be sure of proper care in illness, and to have in my family the remedies I may need, — in short, to have both consultations and prescriptions at hand.

TOINETTE.

Well, that's giving a reason properly; and there 's pleasure in being answered civilly. But, monsieur, lay your hand upon your conscience and answer: Are you really ill?

ARGAN.

What, you vixen! am I ill? Am I, or am I not ill, you impudent thing?

TOINETTE.

Yes, yes, monsieur, yes, you are ill; don't let us quarrel about it. Yes, you are very ill — I 'll agree to that; in fact, you are more ill than you think for, that 's settled. But your daughter ought to marry a man for her own sake; and, as she 's not ill, there 's no sense in giving her a doctor.

ARGAN.

It is for my sake I give her a doctor. A daughter with good feeling ought to be delighted to marry any one who can contribute to her father's health.

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, will you let me give you some advice — as a friend?

ARGAN.

What advice?

TOINETTE.

Don't do anything more about that marriage.

ARGAN.

Why not?

TOINETTE.

Because your daughter will never consent to it.

ARGAN.

Never consent to it?

TOINETTE.

No, never.

ARGAN.

My daughter?

TOINETTE.

Your daughter. She will tell you herself that she won't have anything to do with Monsieur Diafoirus, or his son Thomas Diafoirus, or with all the other Diafoiruses in the world.

ARGAN.

Well, *I* shall have to do with them. Besides, the marriage is more advantageous than persons think. Monsieur Diafoirus has only this one

son to inherit his property; and moreover, Monsieur Purgon, who has neither wife nor children, settles his whole property on Thomas Diafoirus in case of this marriage; and Monsieur Purgon is a man worth his eight thousand francs a year from invested property.

TOINETTE.

He must have killed a good many folk to be as rich as that.

ARGAN.

Eight thousand francs a year is something; not counting his patrimony.

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, that 's all very fine and good, I dare say; but I come back to what I told you before. I advise you, between ourselves, to choose another husband for your daughter. I tell you she 's not made to be Madame Diafoirus.

ARGAN.

But I choose, I, that she shall be.

TOINETTE.

Hi! fie! don't say that.

ARGAN.

Not say it?

TOINETTE.

No.

ARGAN.

Why should n't I say it?

TOINETTE.

Folks will think you don't know what you 're talking about.

ARGAN.

They may say what they please; but I say to you that I choose she shall do as I have promised for her.

TOINETTE.

Well, I 'm sure she will not do so.

ARGAN.

I 'll force her to.

TOINETTE.

She won't do it, I tell you.

ARGAN.

She shall do it, or I 'll put her in a convent.

TOINETTE.

You?

ARGAN.

I.

TOINETTE.

Pooh!

ARGAN.

What do you mean by that?

TOINETTE.

You won't put her into a convent.

ARGAN.

I sha'n't put her into a convent?

TOINETTE.

No.

ARGAN.

No?

TOINETTE.

No.

ARGAN.

Yah! Here 's a pretty state of things! I sha'n't put my daughter in a convent if I choose?

TOINETTE.

No, I tell you.

ARGAN.

Who 'll hinder me?

TOINETTE.

Yourself.

ARGAN.

I?

TOINETTE.

Yes; you 'd never have the heart to do it.

ARGAN.

I should.

TOINETTE.

You are joking.

ARGAN.

I 'm not joking.

TOINETTE.

Fatherly feeling would get the better of you.

ARGAN.

It would n't.

TOINETTE.

A tear or two, a couple of arms about your neck, a "dear, little darling papa," said very lovingly, would soften you.

ARGAN.

It would n't do anything of the kind.

TOINETTE.

Yes, it would.

ARGAN.

I tell you that I shall not change my mind.

TOINETTE.

Fiddle-de-dee!

ARGAN.

You are not to say, Fiddle-de-dee.

TOINETTE.

Oh, goodness! I know you; you are kind at heart.

ARGAN, *very angry.*

I am not kind; I 'm very unkind when I choose.

TOINETTE.

There, there, gently, monsieur; you forget you 're a sick man.

ARGAN.

I command her, absolutely, to take the husband I have chosen for her.

TOINETTE.

And I forbid her, absolutely, to do so.

ARGAN.

What 's the world coming to, that I should hear such talk from a hussy of a servant to her master?

TOINETTE.

When a master does n't pay heed to what he does, a servant of any sense has a right to put him straight.

ARGAN, *rushing at Toinette.*

Insolent thing! I 'll beat you!

TOINETTE, *evading Argan, and putting a chair between them.*

It is my duty to oppose the things which will dishonor you.

ARGAN, *chasing her with his stick.*

Here! here! I 'll teach you to talk to me!

TOINETTE, *evading him.*

I 'm doing my best, as I ought, to keep you from committing a folly.

ARGAN, *still chasing her.*

Vixen!

TOINETTE, *still evading him.*

No, I 'll never agree to that marriage.

ARGAN, *as before.*

Jade!

TOINETTE, *as before.*

She sha'n't marry your Thomas Diafoirus.

ARGAN, *still after her.*

Impudent slut!

TOINETTE, *still evading him.*

She 'll obey me, sooner than she will you.

ARGAN, *stopping short.*

Angélique! won't you silence that vixen for me?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Oh, father! don't make yourself ill.

ARGAN, *to Angélique.*

If you don't stop her, I 'll curse you.

TOINETTE.

And I 'll disinherit her if she obeys you.

ARGAN, *flinging himself into his chair.*

Ah! ah! I 'm tired out. It is enough to kill me!

SCENE SIXTH

BÉLINE, ARGAN

ARGAN.

Ah! my wife, come here.

BÉLINE.

My poor, dear husband, what is it?

ARGAN.

Come here and help me.

BÉLINE.

What 's the matter with him, poor little man?

ARGAN.

Darling!

BÉLINE.

My love!

ARGAN.

They 've made me so angry!

BÉLINE.

Ah! my dear little husband! How, love?

ARGAN.

Your hussy of a Toinette is getting more insolent than ever.

BÉLINE.

Don't put yourself in a passion.

ARGAN.

She made me furious, darling.

BÉLINE.

Gently, dearest.

ARGAN.

She contradicted me for an hour about the things I want to do.

BÉLINE.

There! there! gently.

ARGAN.

She had the audacity to tell me that I am not ill.

BÉLINE.

She is a saucy thing.

ARGAN.

You know, dear heart, how it is?

BÉLINE.

Yes, dear heart, she was wrong.

ARGAN.

Dearest, that hussy will be the death of me.

BÉLINE.

There! there! there!

ARGAN.

She is the cause of all the bile I have in me.

BÉLINE.

You must n't get so vexed.

ARGAN.

I don't know how often I 've told you to send her away.

BÉLINE.

But, my dear, there are no servants without faults; we are obliged to put up with some bad qualities because of their good ones. Toinette is handy, careful, industrious, and, above all, faithful; and you know that in these days we have to be so cautious in hiring servants — Here! Toinette!

SCENE SEVENTH

ARGAN, BÉLINE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE.

Madame.

BÉLINE.

Why did you make my husband angry?

TOINETTE, *in a meek voice.*

I, madame? Alas! I don't know what you mean. I 'm always trying to please monsieur in every way.

ARGAN.

Deceitful thing!

TOINETTE.

He told me he wanted to give his daughter in marriage to the son of Monsieur Diafoirus. I answered that although the match would be a good one for her, I thought he had better put her in a convent.

BÉLINE, *to Argan.*

I don't see any harm in that. I think she is right.

ARGAN.

Ah! my love, don't believe her. She is a wretch, who has been saying all sorts of insolent things to me.

BÉLINE.

Well, well, I believe you, my dear. There, compose yourself. Listen to me, Toinette; if you make my husband angry again, I shall turn you out of the house. Here, give me his fur-lined cloak, and some pillows to prop him in his chair. Poor dear! you are all I don't know how. Pull your cap over your ears; there 's nothing that gives cold so quickly as the wind in our ears.

ARGAN.

Ah! darling, how thankful I am to you for all the care you take of me.

BÉLINE, *shaking up the pillows which she places about Argan.*

Rise a moment that I may put this under you; and this to lean against; and that on the other side. I 'll put one behind your back, and another to support your head.

TOINETTE, *plumping a pillow on the top of his head.*

And this to keep off draughts.

ARGAN, *jumping up angrily and flinging his pillows at Toinette, who escapes out of the room.*

You jade! do you want to smother me?

SCENE EIGHTH

ARGAN, BÉLINE

BÉLINE.

There! there! there! Now what is it?

ARGAN.

Oh! oh! I can't bear this.

BÉLINE.

Why do you get so angry? She meant well.

ARGAN.

You don't know, my love, the maliciousness of that vixen. Ah! she has put me quite beside myself; it will take at least eight draughts and a dozen injections to undo the harm she has done.

BÉLINE.

Come, come, my love, quiet yourself.

ARGAN.

Darling! you are my only consolation.

BÉLINE.

Poor little man!

ARGAN.

To show my gratitude for the love you give me, I wish, dear heart, — as I have told you already, — to make my will.

BÉLINE.

Ah! my love, don't speak of that, I implore you, I cannot bear the thought; the mere mention of the word makes me shudder.

ARGAN.

I told you to speak of it to your notary.

BÉLINE.

Yes, he is here; I brought him with me.

ARGAN.

Then let him enter, love.

BÉLINE.

Alas! dear, when a woman loves her husband she is not able to attend to such a matter.

SCENE NINTH

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI, ARGAN, BÉLINE

ARGAN.

Come in, Monsieur de Bonnefoi, come in. Take a seat, if you please. My wife tells me that you are a very honorable man and one of her best friends. I therefore told her to speak to you about a will I wish to make.

BÉLINE.

Ah, me! I am not able to discuss such matters.

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI.

She has explained to me your intentions, monsieur, and the provision you desire to make for her. I must tell you, as to that, that you cannot give anything to your wife by will.

ARGAN.

Why not?

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI.

Our legal custom is against it. If you were living in a region where statute law obtains it might be done; but in Paris, and in all places under common law, — at least in most of them — you cannot do it; any such disposal of your property would be void. All the provision that a man and woman joined in matrimony can make for each other is by mutual gifts in their lifetime. And even then they cannot do so if there are children, whether of their own marriage, or of a previous marriage on either side.

ARGAN.

That's a very improper legal custom. Who ever heard the like! that a husband can't leave anything to a wife who loves him tenderly, and takes the utmost care of him! I shall consult

my solicitor, and get him to tell me what I had better do.

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI.

There is no use going to solicitors; they are very stern on this point, for they consider it a crime to evade the law. Solicitors make difficulties; they know nothing about evasions of conscience. There are other persons, however, more accommodating, who can be consulted; men who have expedients by which they slip past the law and do the justice which law does not permit. They know how to overcome legal difficulties, and find means to keep clear of penalties in some indirect way. If it were not for this, I don't know where we should be. We notaries must have facilities for getting round things; otherwise we could do nothing, and I would n't give a fig for our profession.

ARGAN.

My wife told me, monsieur, that you were a very able as well as a very honorable man. Tell me, therefore, if you please, how I can manage to give her my fortune and cut off my children.

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI.

How? Why, you must quietly select some close friend of your wife, to whom you must leave your property, in due form, by will; and this friend will give the property back to her at your decease. Or, you can draw a large number of notes, secretly, in favor of various creditors, whose names will stand for that of your wife, in whose hands they will place a written declaration that this transaction is for her benefit. Or, thirdly, you can, during your lifetime, pay ready money into her hands, or notes payable to bearer.

BÉLINE.

Oh, Heavens! don't torment yourself about such matters. If anything should happen to you, dear love, I could not stay in this world.

ARGAN.

Darling!

BÉLINE.

Yes, dear, if I should be so wretched as to lose you —

ARGAN.

My dear wife!

BÉLINE.

Life would be nothing to me then!

ARGAN.

My treasure!

BÉLINE.

I should follow you, to prove my love.

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI, *to Béline.*

These tears are out of season; things have not come to that pass yet.

BÉLINE.

Ah! monsieur, you don't know what it is to have a husband whom you love distractedly.

ARGAN.

My sole regret, if I should die, dear heart, is that I have no child by you. Monsieur Purgon promised that he would make me have one.

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI.

The thing can still be done.

ARGAN.

Darling, it seems I must make arrangements for your benefit in the manner monsieur here advises; but, as a matter of precaution, I shall give you twenty thousand francs in gold, which are now in the valance of my bed, and two notes

payable to bearer, due to me,— one from Monsieur Damon, the other from Monsieur Gérante.

BÉLINE.

No, no, I do not want all that. Ah!— how much did you say is in the valance?

ARGAN.

Twenty thousand francs, my darling.

BÉLINE.

Don't speak to me of money, I implore you. Ah!— what are the two notes worth?

ARGAN.

Dearest, one is for four thousand francs, the other for six.

BÉLINE.

All the money in the world, dear love, is nothing to my heart compared with you.

MONSIEUR DE BONNEFOI, *to Argan.*

Shall we now proceed to draw the papers?

ARGAN.

Yes, monsieur; but we had better go into my study. Darling, help me there, if you please.

SCENE TENTH

ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE.

They 've got the notary; and I heard some talk of making wills. Your stepmother will look out she 's not caught napping. There 's some conspiracy afloat against your interests; and she is trying to drive your father into it.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Let him do what he likes as to his property, so long as he will not give away my heart. You see, Toinette, what desperate schemes they have against me. Don't forsake me, I implore you, in my extremity.

TOINETTE.

I forsake you! I 'd rather die. Your stepmother may try as she likes to make me her confidante and get me over to her interests, but I have never liked her; I've always been on your side. Leave me to do as I see fit. I 'll employ all means to serve you; but, in order to do so with effect, I must change my batteries, hide the zeal I have for you, and pretend to

share the feelings of your father and your step-mother.

ANGÉLIQUE.

But I implore you try to let Cléante know of this marriage which my father says he has arranged.

TOINETTE.

Yes, yes, I 'll find a way.

SCENE ELEVENTH

BÉLINE, *within*, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE

BÉLINE.

Toinette!

TOINETTE, *to Angélique.*

There! she 's calling me. Good-night. Rely on me.

END OF FIRST ACT.[1]

[1] Molière placed Interludes between the acts of this play; but the sparkle and airy lightness of the French cannot be given in translation. The English verses are therefore omitted as being an injury to the comedy. —TR.

Act Second

The scene is Argan's chamber

SCENE FIRST

CLÉANTE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE.

WHAT do you want, monsieur?

CLÉANTE.

What do I want?

TOINETTE.

Ah, ha! is it you? What a surprise! Why have you come here?

CLÉANTE.

To know my fate, speak to my lovely Angélique, consult the feelings of her heart, and ask her determination on this fatal marriage of which I have been warned.

TOINETTE.

Yes, but you can't talk off-hand to Angélique in that free way. We must use caution, mys-

tery; you have been told of the close watch they keep upon her. She is never allowed to go out, or speak to any one; and it was only the curiosity of an old aunt which got us the liberty of going to the theatre, where your loves were born, — though we have taken very good care not to mention that circumstance.

CLÉANTE.

For that very reason I have not come here as Cléante, her lover, but as the friend of her music-master, from whom I have permission to say he sends me to give lessons in his stead.

TOINETTE.

Here comes her father; step back a minute, and let me tell him you are here.

SCENE SECOND

ARGAN, TOINETTE

ARGAN, *thinking himself alone and not seeing Toinette.*

Monsieur Purgon told me to walk up and down in my room every morning; twelve ups and twelve downs; but I forgot to ask whether he meant the width of the room or the length.

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, here 's a —

ARGAN.

Speak low, you torment! you shake my brain; you never seem to reflect it is n't proper to shout to a sick man.

TOINETTE.

I want to tell you, monsieur —

ARGAN.

Speak low, I say.

TOINETTE, *moving her lips and pretending to speak.*

Monsieur —

ARGAN.

Hey?

TOINETTE, *doing the same.*

I told you —

ARGAN.

What do you say?

TOINETTE, *aloud.*

I say that here 's a man who wants to speak to you.

ARGAN.

Let him come in.

Toinette signs to Cléante to come forward.

SCENE THIRD

CLÉANTE.

Monsieur —

TOINETTE.

Don't speak so loud for fear of shaking monsieur's brain.

CLÉANTE.

I am delighted to find you able to be about, and to see that you are better in health.

TOINETTE, *pretending to be angry.*

What's that? better in health? 'T is n't true; monsieur is always very ill.

CLÉANTE.

I was told that monsieur was better, and I see that he looks well in the face.

TOINETTE.

What do you mean by looking well in the face? Monsieur looks very badly; and those who told you that are fools. Monsieur never felt worse in his life.

ARGAN.

That is true.

TOINETTE.

He sleeps, and eats, and drinks, and walks about like other people, but that does n't prevent him from being very ill.

ARGAN.

She is right.

CLÉANTE.

Monsieur, I am extremely sorry. I am sent here by the singing-master who gives lessons to your daughter. He finds himself obliged to go into the country for a time, and, as I am his intimate friend, he sends me in his place to give the lessons; fearing that if they are interrupted she may forget what she has already learned.

ARGAN.

Very good. (*To Toinette*) Call Angélique.

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, had n't I better take the gentleman to her room.

ARGAN.

No; send her here.

TOINETTE.

He can't give her a proper kind of lesson unless they are by themselves.

ARGAN.

Yes, he can.

TOINETTE.

But, monsieur, the noise will deafen you. You must n't let yourself be excited in your present state; it won't do to shake your brain.

ARGAN.

No matter, no matter; I like music, and I shall be very glad to — Ah! here she is. (*To Toinette*) Go and see if my wife is dressed.

—♦—

SCENE FOURTH

ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE

ARGAN.

Come here, my daughter. Your music-master has gone into the country, and here 's a person whom he sends in his place to give you your lesson —

ANGÉLIQUE, *recognizing Cléante.*

Heavens!

ARGAN.

What 's all this? Why are you surprised?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Because —

ARGAN.

Why are you so agitated, I 'd like to know?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Because, father, such a surprising thing has happened.

ARGAN.

What thing?

ANGÉLIQUE.

I dreamed last night I was in great trouble, and a person, exactly like monsieur, came to me. I asked him to help me, and he at once took me out of the trouble I was in. Therefore my surprise was naturally very great at suddenly finding in your room the person who had been in my mind all night.

CLÉANTE.

'T is not an unhappy fate to fill your mind, whether sleeping or waking; and my pleasure would be greater still if you were really in some trouble from which you thought me worthy to rescue you; there is nothing I would not do —

SCENE FIFTH

ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE, *to Argan.*

Faith! monsieur, I 'm on your side now. I take back all that I said yesterday. Here 's Monsieur Diafoirus, father, and Monsieur Diafoirus, son; they 've come to pay you a visit. You 'll be finely son-in-lawed! He 's the best-made lad in all creation, and the wittiest. I have only heard him say two words, but they just ravished me; and your daughter will be charmed with him.

ARGAN, *to Cléante, who makes semblance of going away.*

Don't go, monsieur. I am about to marry my daughter; and her projected husband, whom she has not yet seen, is coming to visit us.

CLÉANTE.

You do me great honor, monsieur, in making me the witness of so agreeable an interview.

ARGAN.

He is the son of a clever doctor, and the marriage will take place in four days.

CLÉANTE.

Ah!

ARGAN.

Inform her music-master, in order that he may be present at the ceremony.

CLÉANTE.

I will not fail to do so.

ARGAN.

I invite you, also.

CLÉANTE.

You do me great honor.

TOINETTE.

Come, make ready to receive them. Here they are!

SCENE SIXTH

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE, LACQUEYS

ARGAN, *putting his hand to his cap, but not removing it.*

Monsieur Purgon, monsieur, forbids me to uncover my head; you belong to the profession, and you know the consequences.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Our visits are made to bring succor to the patient not impairment.

Argan and Monsieur Diafoirus both talk at once.

ARGAN.

I receive, monsieur,

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

We have come, monsieur,

ARGAN.

With much satisfaction,

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

My son Thomas and I,

ARGAN.

The honor that you have done me;

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

To testify, monsieur,

ARGAN.

And I could have wished

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

The gratification that we feel

ARGAN.

To be able to call on you,

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

At the favor you have done us

ARGAN.

And assure you of this in person;

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

In receiving our visit,

ARGAN.

But you know, monsieur,

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

And in granting us, monsieur,

ARGAN.

That a poor sick man

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

The honor of your alliance;

ARGAN.

Cannot do otherwise

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

And we desire to assure you

ARGAN.

Than tell you, here,

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

That in all things depending upon us,

ARGAN.

That he will take every occasion

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

And, indeed, in all others,

ARGAN.

To make you feel, monsieur,

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

We shall ever be ready, monsieur,

ARGAN.

That he is wholly at your service.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

To testify our zeal. (*To his son*) Now, Thomas, advance, and pay your compliments.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Monsieur Diafoirus.*

I 'm to begin with the father I suppose?

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Yes.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Argan.*

Monsieur, I come to acknowledge, cherish, revere, and bow down to you as a second father; to whom, I here venture to say, I owe more than to my first father. The first begot me, but you have chosen me. The first received me of necessity, you have accepted me by favor. What I have obtained from him is the work of his body; what I obtain from you is the work of your will; and in so far as the spiritual faculties are higher than the corporal faculties, so much the more do I owe to you; and so much the more do I hold precious this future sonship, in behalf of which I come, today, to offer you, in advance, my very humble and very respectful homage.

TOINETTE.

Long live colleges, if that 's the sort of clever man they turn out.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Monsieur Diafoirus.*

Did I say it right, father?

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Optime.

ARGAN, *to Angélique.*

Come, salute him.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Monsieur Diafoirus.*

Am I to kiss her, father?

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Yes, yes.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Angélique.*

Madame, in the honored relation to which Heaven has called you, of stepmother —

ARGAN, *to Thomas Diafoirus.*

It is not my wife, but my daughter to whom you are speaking.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Where is the stepmother?

ARGAN.

She is coming presently.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Monsieur Diafoirus.*

Shall I wait, father, till she comes?

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

No; pay your compliment to mademoiselle.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, *to Angélique.*

Mademoiselle, neither more or less than the statue of Memnon, which rendered harmonious sounds when touched by the rays of the rising sun, do I feel myself inspired with soft transport at the apparition of the sun of your beauties; and, as naturalists have observed that the flower named heliotrope turns ever to the orb of day, so my heart will henceforth turn to the resplendent orbs of your most perfect eyes as to its polestar. Permit me, mademoiselle, to append, this day, on the altar of your charms, the offering of a heart which aspires to no other glory than to be, through life, mademoiselle, your very humble, very obedient, and very faithful servant and husband.

TOINETTE.

There! see what it is to study and learn to say fine things.

ARGAN, *to Cléante.*

What do you think of that?

CLÉANTE.

I think monsieur is marvellous; and, if he is as good a doctor as he is an orator, it will be a great pleasure to be one of his patients.

TOINETTE.

That it will. And a fine thing it will be, too, if his cures are as wonderful as his speeches.

ARGAN.

Come, give me my chair, and set chairs for everybody. (*The lacqueys place chairs.*) Sit there, my daughter. (*To Monsieur Diafoirus*) You see, monsieur, how every one present admires your son. I think you a happy father to have a child like him.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Monsieur, it is not because I am his father that I say I have reason to be satisfied with my son; all who see him speak of him as a youth without defects. He has never had a vivid imagination, nor that sparkling wit which is observable in some lads; but, for that very reason, I have augured well of his judgment, — a quality most requisite in the exercise of our profession. When a little boy, he was never what is called lively and wide-awake; he was gentle, quiet, and taciturn, — saying nothing, and playing only those games that are termed infantile. We had the utmost difficulty in teaching him to read; at nine years of age he did not

know his letters. So much the better, I said to myself; backward trees bear the best fruit. It is far more difficult to carve letters in marble than on sand, but the words carved last longer; and this slowness of comprehension, this lethargic imagination, are signs of his future sound judgment. When I sent him to school he had much trouble. But he braced himself against all difficulties, and his teachers constantly praised him to me for his application and hard work. At last, by dint of hammering hard, he took his degree most creditably; and I may say, without vanity, that for the last two years which he has spent at the Medical College no student has excited more notice than he in the argumentative disputes of the School. He has made himself formidable. No action is taken about which he does not argue in opposition. He is firm in discussion, strong as a Turk in his principles, never gives up his own opinion, and pursues an argument to the innermost recesses of logic. But the thing I like best in him — in which I may say, he follows my example — is that he holds blindly to the opinions of the olden time, and that he never for a moment, listens, or wishes even to understand, the theories and experiments of the pretended discoveries of this

century,—more especially that of the circulation of the blood, and other opinions of that stripe.

Thomas Diafoirus, *drawing a large rolled document from his pocket and offering it to Angélique.*

I have sustained in this treatise an argument against the blood circulators, which, with monsieur's permission (*bowing to Argan*), I venture to present to mademoiselle as a tribute, which I owe to her, of the first fruits of my intellect.

Angélique.

Monsieur, it is a most useless article to me; I know nothing of such things.

Toinette.

Give it to me; the engraving is good and will serve to decorate our chamber.

Thomas Diafoirus, *bowing to Argan.*

With monsieur's permission, I invite you all to come and see, one of these days, for your amusement, the dissection of a woman, upon which I am to lecture.

Toinette.

And a most agreeable amusement it will be. Some take their mistresses to the theatre, but 't is far more gallant to take them to a dissection.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

As for the qualities required for marriage and propagation, I can assure you that according to medical rules, he is all that you could wish; he possesses in a praiseworthy degree the prolific power, and is of a temperament to procreate children of sound constitution.

ARGAN.

It is your intention, monsieur, is it not, to forward his interests at court, and obtain for him an appointment as doctor?

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

To speak frankly, monsieur, our profession, it seems to me, has never been agreeably placed among persons of rank. I have always thought it better that we should confine our practice to the body of the people. The people are accommodating; we are not accountable for our actions to any of them; and provided we follow the laws of science, we need not trouble ourselves about what may happen. But the trouble with the rich is, that when they are ill they insist that a doctor shall cure them.

TOINETTE.

That 's mighty funny! they are very ridiculous to expect you gentlemen to cure them. 'T is n't for that you attend them. You are there to pocket your fees and prescribe remedies; it is for them to get well if they can.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

That is true. Our profession only requires us to treat patients as the books say.

ARGAN, *to Cléante.*

Monsieur, have the goodness to make my daughter sing a little for this company.

CLÉANTE.

I was awaiting your orders, monsieur; it had already occurred to me that, in order to divert the company, I might sing with mademoiselle one scene of a little opera which has lately been composed. (*To Angélique, giving her a paper*) Here, mademoiselle, is your part.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Mine?

CLÉANTE, *in a low voice.*

Don't object, if you please; listen, and let me make you comprehend what the scene we

are to sing means. (*Aloud*) I have not much voice, but it will be enough if I make myself heard; the company will have the goodness to excuse me inasmuch as I procure for them the pleasure of hearing mademoiselle.

ARGAN.

Are the verses fine?

CLÉANTE.

It is, properly speaking, a little impromptu opera. What you will hear us sing is cadenced prose, a sort of free, or blank verse, such as passion and necessity may inspire in two persons who speak to each other hurriedly, on the spur of the moment.

ARGAN.

Very good. We are listening.

CLÉANTE.

I will explain the subject of the scene. A shepherd is absorbed in the beauties of a play, which has only just begun, when his attention is distracted by a noise behind him. He turns, and sees a brutal man who, with insulting language, ill-treats a milkmaid. Instantly he takes up the cause of a sex to which all men owe

homage. After giving the brutal man just punishment for his insolence, he returns to the milkmaid, and sees a young girl who, from the finest eyes he ever saw, is shedding the loveliest tears in all the world. Alas! — he says to himself — how can any one insult so charming a person? What inhuman barbarian would not be touched by tears like these? But he at once takes pains to stop the tears he thinks so beautiful; and the lovely milkmaid also takes pains to thank him for his slight service. And she does it in so tender and feeling a manner that the shepherd cannot resist; every word, every look is a tongue of flame penetrating to his heart. Can there be — he says to himself — any service which deserves such words of gratitude? What would I not do, what toils, what dangers would I not encounter to win, even for a moment, the touching favor of a soul so grateful? The play concludes without his giving it the least attention; though he thinks it all too short, because, when it is over, he is forced to part from his adorable milkmaid. From that first sight, from that first moment, he bears away with him a love which years could not have made more violent. Behold him now a prey to the ills of absence; he is tortured by

not seeing that which, in fact, he scarcely saw; he does all he can to recover sight of her whom he cherishes, night and day, in tender memory. But the great restraint in which her family hold the milkmaid deprive him of all means of doing so. The violence of his passion makes him resolve to ask in marriage the adorable beauty without whom he feels he cannot live. He obtains her permission, through a note which he finds means to send to her. But alas! at the very moment, he learns that the father of his love has arranged her marriage with another man, and the ceremony is about to take place. Fancy the cruel shock to the heart of the now sad shepherd! Behold him weighed down with deadly grief. He cannot endure the dreadful idea of seeing her he loves in the arms of another; and his passion, in its despair, finds a way by which he enters the home of his maid to learn her feelings and hear from her lips the fate which awaits him. He finds in that house the preparations that he dreads; he meets the contemptible rival whom her father's caprice sets up against him, he sees this ridiculous being triumphing beside his dearest maid as though she were his sure and certain conquest. That sight fills him with a rage that he can

scarcely master. He casts a sorrowful look upon her whom he adores, —his respect, and the presence of her father not permitting him to address her except by the language of his eyes; until, being unable to control himself the transports of his love compel him to speak thus (*sings*): —

Fair Phillis, I cannot bear my pain,
Break this harsh silence, open that soft heart;
Tell me my fate;
Am I to live, or die?

ANGÉLIQUE, *singing.*

You see me, Tyrcis, sad and melancholy
At the dark threat of marriage which alarms you;
I raise my eyes to heaven; I look at you; I sigh —
Does not that tell you what my thoughts are?

ARGAN.

Hey-day! I did not know my daughter was so clever that she can sing from a book without hesitating.

CLÉANTE, *singing.*

Ah! beauteous Phillis,
Can it be that I, Tyrcis, thy lover,
Have the joy
To hold some place within thy heart?

ANGÉLIQUE.

I make no effort to escape that pain,
Yes, Tyrcis, yes, I love thee!

CLÉANTE.

Oh, words of gladness!
Have I heard aright?
Say them again, my Phillis, lest I doubt them.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Yes, Tyrcis, yes, I love thee!

CLÉANTE.

Again, in mercy, Phillis!

ANGÉLIQUE.

I love thee, Tyrcis.

CLÉANTE.

Again, again, a hundred times,
And weary not!

ANGÉLIQUE.

I love thee, yes, I love thee,
I love thee, Tyrcis!

CLÉANTE.

Gods! kings! ye who at your feet
See the whole world,
Can you compare your happiness with mine?
But Phillis, lo! a thought —
A rival, oh, a rival!

ANGÉLIQUE.

But one I hate, worse than I hate death;
His presence is to me, as 't is to you,
A cruel martyrdom.

CLÉANTE.

And yet your father will compel you
To this marriage.

ANGÉLIQUE.

I 'd rather, oh! I 'd rather die
Than e'er consent.
Yes, yes, I 'll die, I 'll die!

ARGAN.

And what does her father say to all that?

CLÉANTE.

He says nothing.

ARGAN.

Then he 's a fool of a father, to allow such follies and say nothing.

CLÉANTE, *continuing to sing.*

Ah! love —

ARGAN.

No, no, we 've had enough of that. This comedy sets a bad example. The shepherd Tyrcis is impertinent, and the milkmaid is a saucy thing to talk in that way before her father. (*To Angélique*) Show me that paper. Ha! what 's this? where are those words that you have been singing? There 's nothing written here but music.

CLÉANTE.

Are you not aware, monsieur, that the discovery has been made of an invention by which words are written with notes of music?

ARGAN.

Pooh! Your servant, monsieur, until we meet again. We could have done as well without your foolish opera.

CLÉANTE.

I hoped to amuse you.

ARGAN.

Folly is never amusing. Ah! here comes my wife.

SCENE SEVENTH

BÉLINE, ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE

ARGAN.

My love, this is the son of Monsieur Diafoirus.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Madame, in the honored relation to which heaven has called you, of stepmother —

BÉLINE.

Monsieur, I am delighted to have come in time to have the honor of seeing you.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

— of step-mother — of step-mother — Madame, you interrupted me in the middle of my sentence, and that has upset my memory.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Thomas, reserve that for another time.

ARGAN.

I wish, darling, you had been here just now.

Toinette.

Ah! madame, you don't know what you have lost in the second father, and the statue of Memnon, and the flower called heliotrope.

Argan.

Come, my daughter, put your hand in his, pledge him your faith, and take him as your husband.

Angélique.

Father!

Argan.

Well? 'Father!' what do you mean by that?

Angélique.

For pity's sake, don't hurry matters thus. Give us, at least, the time to know each other; to see if inclination, so needful to a perfect marriage, may yet be born in us.

Thomas Diafoirus.

In me, mademoiselle, it is already born; I need wait no longer.

Angélique.

You may be hasty, monsieur, I am not; and I confess your merits have as yet made small impression on my soul.

ARGAN.

Come, come; there will be ample time to make it when you are married.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Ah! father, give me time, I do entreat you. Marriage is a chain with which we ought not to be bound by force. If monsieur is an honorable man he will not wish to accept a woman who is constrained against her will.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Nego consequentiam, mademoiselle; I am an honorable man, yet I am willing to accept you from your father's hand.

ANGÉLIQUE.

'T is a wicked way to make a woman love you, — to seize her by violence.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

We read of the ancients, mademoiselle, that the custom was to carry off by force the maids they meant to marry, so that it might not seem by their consent they took a husband.

ANGÉLIQUE.

The ancients, monsieur, are the ancients; we are a people of the present century. Shams

are not needed in our day; for when a marriage pleases us we are quite capable of consenting without its being forced upon us. Have patience, monsieur; if, as you say, you love me you surely ought to do that which I wish.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Yes, mademoiselle, so far as the interests of my love permit.

ANGÉLIQUE.

But the chief mark of love is in yielding to the wishes of the one we love.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Distinguo, mademoiselle. In all that does not concern possession, *concedo ;* but in all that does concern it, *nego.*

TOINETTE, *to Angélique.*

Useless for you to argue. Monsieur is fresh from college; he 'll give you change for all you say. Why resist? and why refuse the glory of being fastened to the body of the Faculty?

BÉLINE.

Perhaps she has some other fancy in her head.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And if I had, madame, it would be such as honor and good sense permitted.

ARGAN.

Yah! a pretty part I 'm made to play in this.

BÉLINE.

If I were you, my dear, I should not force her to this marriage — I know what I should do.

ANGÉLIQUE.

And I know, madame, what you mean to say, and the kind intentions that you have on my behalf; but, possibly, your counsels may not have the luck of being executed.

BÉLINE.

Modest and virtuous girls, like you, scoff at obedience to their father's will. It was not so in my day.

ANGÉLIQUE.

The duty of a daughter has its limits, madame; reason, and the laws do not extend it over all things.

BÉLINE.

In other words, you want to marry, but you also want to choose the husband you may fancy.

ANGÉLIQUE.

If my father will not give me a husband whom I like, I do implore him at least not to force upon me one whom I can never love.

ARGAN, *to Monsieur Diafoirus and his son.*

Gentlemen, I ask your pardon for this behavior.

ANGÉLIQUE.

All persons have their own desires in marrying. As for me, who only wish a husband if I can love him truly, and who mean to make that love the bond of all my life, I honestly declare that I want more security. Some women take their husbands solely to be freed from the restraint of parents, and have the power of doing as they please. Others, madame, make marriage a matter of pure self-interest; they marry for their dowry, awaiting riches at the death of him they marry. Such persons, naturally, are less particular and think but little of the man they wed.

BÉLINE.

Your mood is very argumentative. I 'd like to know just what you mean by what you say.

ANGÉLIQUE.

I, madame? what should I mean but what I say?

BÉLINE.

My dear, you are too silly to be endured.

ANGÉLIQUE.

You are trying, madame, to make me answer you with some impertinence; but I will not give you that advantage.

BÉLINE.

Nothing can equal your impertinence.

ANGÉLIQUE.

No, madame, no; you cannot do it.

BÉLINE.

You have a silly pride, an insolent presumption which make all those who know you shrug their shoulders.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Madame, once more, there is no use in this; I shall be wise in spite of you; and to deprive you of the hope of succeeding in what you wish I take myself out of sight.

SCENE EIGHTH

Argan, Béline, Monsieur Diafoirus, Thomas Diafoirus, Toinette

Argan, *to Angélique as she goes away.*

Hear this: you have two alternatives before you, — either to marry monsieur within four days, or go into a nunnery. (*To Béline*) Don't be troubled, dearest; I shall bring her to reason.

Béline.

I am sorry to leave you, my little man, but I have an errand to do in town, which cannot wait. I 'll soon be back.

Argan.

Go, my love, and, as you pass, call on your notary, and tell him to hasten you know what.

Béline.

Adieu, my dear.

Argan.

Adieu, my darling.

SCENE NINTH

ARGAN, MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS, THOMAS DIAFOIRUS, TOINETTE

ARGAN.

There is a woman who loves me — 't is hard to believe how much!

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Monsieur, we will now take leave of you.

ARGAN.

Before you go, I beg you to tell me how I am.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS, *feeling Argan's pulse.*

Come, Thomas, take monsieur's other wrist and see if you can give me a correct opinion of his pulse. *Quid dicis?*

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Dico that monsieur's pulse is the pulse of a man who is not well.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Right.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

It is duriusculus, not to say hard.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Right again.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Throbbing.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Bene.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Somewhat intermittent.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Optime.

THOMAS DIAFOIRUS.

Which is a symptom of disorder in the *parenchymus splenicus*, that is to say, the spleen.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Right.

ARGAN.

No, he is not right. Monsieur Purgon says the disorder is in my liver.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Yes; when we say *parenchymus*, we mean either; on account of the close sympathy between them by means of the *vas breve*, the *pylorus*, and often of the *meatus cholidocus*. No doubt he ordered you to eat roasted meats?

ARGAN.

No, only boiled ones.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Well, roast or boiled, it is all the same. He is prudent in his directions; you could n't be in safer hands.

ARGAN.

Monsieur, how many grains of salt ought I to put in an egg.

MONSIEUR DIAFOIRUS.

Six, eight, ten; invariably in even numbers, — contrary to medicines, which are always administered in the uneven numbers.

ARGAN.

Adieu; till we meet again, monsieur.

SCENE TENTH

BÉLINE, ARGAN

BÉLINE.

Dearest, before going out I have come to tell you something which you had better attend to at once. As I passed the door of Angélique's room

I saw a young man with her, who ran away as soon as he saw me.

ARGAN.

A young man in my daughter's room!

BÉLINE.

Yes, and your little Louison was there, too; she can tell you about it.

ARGAN.

Send her here, darling; send her here at once. Ha! the shameless girl! (*Alone*) I don't wonder now at her resistance.

SCENE ELEVENTH

ARGAN, LOUISON

LOUISON.

Do you want me, papa? My stepmother said you were asking for me.

ARGAN.

Yes. Come here. Stand there. Turn round. Lift your eyes. Look at me. Well?

LOUISON.

What, papa?

ARGAN.

Now, then?

LOUISON.

What?

ARGAN.

Have you nothing to tell me?

LOUISON.

Yes; I can tell you the story of "The Donkey's Skin," or the fable of the "Fox and the Crow" which I learned the other day.

ARGAN.

That is not what I mean.

LOUISON.

What then?

ARGAN.

Ah! you deceitful child; you know very well what I mean.

LOUISON.

No, I beg your pardon, papa, I don't.

ARGAN.

Is that how you obey your father?

LOUISON.

How? what?

ARGAN.

Have I not ordered you, over and over again, to come and tell me at once what you see?

LOUISON.

Yes, papa.

ARGAN.

Have you done so?

LOUISON.

Yes, papa; I have come directly and told you all I have seen.

ARGAN.

Have you seen anything to-day?

LOUISON.

No, papa.

ARGAN.

No?

LOUISON.

No, papa.

ARGAN.

Are you certain?

LOUISON.

Certain, sure.

ARGAN.

Ah ça! then I'll make you see something now.

LOUISON, *seeing her father take a birch rod.*

Ah, papa! papa!

ARGAN.

You are a naughty girl; you never told me that you saw a man in your sister's room.

LOUISON, *weeping.*

Papa!

ARGAN, *taking her by the arm.*

This will teach you not to tell lies.

LOUISON, *flinging herself on her knees.*

Oh, papa! please forgive me; my sister told me not to tell — but I will tell all.

ARGAN.

But first you must be whipped for telling that lie, and then I 'll hear what you have to say.

LOUISON.

Oh! please forgive me, papa!

ARGAN.

No.

LOUISON.

Oh! my dear little papa, don't whip me!

ARGAN.

Yes, I shall.

LOUISON.

For God's sake, papa, don't!

ARGAN, *trying to whip her.*

There!

LOUISON.

Ah, papa, papa! oh stop! I 'm dead!
(*Falls down and pretends to be dead.*)

ARGAN.

Holà! what's this? Louison! Louison! Ah, good heavens! Louison! Ah, my daughter! Miserable man that I am! She 's dead! Wretch, what have I done? Ah! those devils of birches! the black plague take them! Oh, my little daughter! my little Louison! —

LOUISON.

There, there! papa, don't cry; I 'm not quite dead.

ARGAN.

You little deceiver! Well, well, I 'll forgive you this time, provided you tell me at once the whole truth.

LOUISON.

Oh! yes, papa.

ARGAN.

Now be careful what you say, for here's a little finger that knows everything and will tell me if you are telling lies.

LOUISON.

But, papa, don't let my sister know I told you anything.

ARGAN.

No, no.

LOUISON, *after looking to see if any one is listening.*

Well, papa, a man did come into my sister's room when I was there.

ARGAN.

Go on.

LOUISON.

I asked him what he wanted, and he said he was her music-master.

ARGAN, *aside.*

Hum! hum! So that's it, is it? (*To Louison*) What next?

LOUISON.

My sister came in —

ARGAN.

Go on.

LOUISON.

And she said: "Go away! go away! go away! Good heavens, go away! you make me miserable!"

ARGAN.

Well?

LOUISON.

He would n't go.

ARGAN.

What did he say to her?

LOUISON.

Oh! ever so many things.

ARGAN.

What things?

LOUISON.

Well, he said this and that about how he loved her and how pretty she was.

ARGAN.

And then?

LOUISON.

Oh, then he went on his knees to her.

ARGAN.

What next?

LOUISON.

Next he kissed her hands.

ARGAN.

After that?

LOUISON.

After that my stepmother came to the door, and he ran away.

ARGAN.

Did n't anything else happen?

LOUISON.

No, papa.

ARGAN.

But here's my little finger muttering (*puts it to his ear*). Listen! Hey! Ha! Yes! my little finger tells me something you saw and have n't told me.

LOUISON.

Ah! papa; then your little finger tells fibs.

ARGAN.

Take care!

LOUISON.

No, papa; don't believe it. It tells lies, I say.

ARGAN.

Well, well, we 'll see about that. Now run away; and be careful to remember and tell me

what you see; run along. (*Alone*) Ah! there are no children in these days. Dear me! what quantities of things to attend to! I have n't even time to think of my ailments — Oh! I 'm worn out.

(*Drops into a chair.*)

SCENE TWELFTH

BÉRALDE, ARGAN

BÉRALDE.

Hey! brother, how are you? Do you feel well?

ARGAN.

No, brother, very ill.

BÉRALDE.

Very ill! how so?

ARGAN.

You could hardly believe how weak I am.

BÉRALDE.

That 's bad.

ARGAN.

I have n't even the strength to speak.

BÉRALDE.

I came, brother, to propose a marriage for my niece Angélique.

ARGAN.

Don't speak to me of that hussy, brother! She is a false-hearted, insolent, shameless girl, whom I shall put into a nunnery to-morrow.

BÉRALDE.

Ha! now this is capital! I am glad to see your strength is coming back. My visit has done you good already. Well, well, we 'll talk about my business later. Meantime I 've brought with me some strolling singers whom I met. They 'll sing away your griefs and make you more disposed to listen pleasantly to what I have to say. These people are Egyptians dressed as Moors, who perform dances, mingled with songs; and I am certain you 'll enjoy them; they are far better than Monsieur Purgon's prescriptions. Enter.

The brother of the Malade Imaginaire brings in, to amuse him, several Egyptians, men and women, dressed as Moors, who dance and sing.

END OF SECOND ACT.

Act Third

SCENE FIRST

BÉRALDE, ARGAN, TOINETTE

BÉRALDE.

WELL, brother, what do you think of that? Is n't that better than a dose of senna?

TOINETTE.

Hum! good senna is good.

BÉRALDE.

Come now; are not you ready to have a little talk?

ARGAN, *going out.*

Wait for me, brother; I shall soon be back.

TOINETTE.

Hey! monsieur! you've forgotten you can't walk without your stick.

ARGAN.

You are right.

SCENE SECOND

BÉRALDE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE.

Please, monsieur, do not forsake your niece's interests.

BÉRALDE.

I shall employ all possible means to obtain what she wishes.

TOINETTE.

We positively must prevent this preposterous marriage which he has taken into his head. I've been thinking it might be a good plan to introduce a doctor on our side, and disgust him with his Monsieur Purgon and all his ways. But there's no one at hand to take the part, and so I've resolved to play him a trick myself.

BÉRALDE.

What trick?

TOINETTE.

Oh! a ridiculous notion; more lucky than wise, perhaps. Leave me to work it out; but support me on your side. Here he comes.

SCENE THIRD

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

BÉRALDE.

First of all, brother, you must let me ask you not to get your temper up during our conversation.

ARGAN.

Granted.

BÉRALDE.

To reply without acrimony to whatever I may say.

ARGAN.

Yes.

BÉRALDE.

And to discuss the matter about which I have to speak to you with a mind free of passion.

ARGAN.

Good gracious, yes! What a preamble!

BÉRALDE.

Let me ask why, brother, owning the property you do, and having only two daughters, why, I say, should you talk of putting one of them into a convent?

ARGAN.

Let me ask why, brother, I am master in my own family, and able to do as I think best?

BÉRALDE.

Your wife never ceases to urge you to get rid of both your daughters in this way. I don't doubt that as a good Christian she would be delighted to see them both nuns.

ARGAN.

Ha! now we come to the point. It is that poor woman at whom you aim; 't is she who does the harm; and you are all against her.

BÉRALDE.

No, brother. But let us drop that subject now: she is a woman of the best intentions toward your family, and totally devoid of selfish interest; her tenderness for you is marvellous; and the kindness and affection she manifests for your children is inconceivable; that is agreed upon. Let us say no more on that point, but return to your daughter. What is your idea, brother, in giving her in marriage to the son of a doctor?

ARGAN.

My idea is, brother, to give myself a son-in-law of the kind I want.

BÉRALDE.

But this one, brother, is not the kind your daughter wants. I have another husband to propose more suitable for her.

ARGAN.

But this one, brother, is more suitable for me.

BÉRALDE.

Is the husband that she marries yours or hers?

ARGAN.

He is for both of us. I wish to bring into my family the persons of whom I stand in need.

BÉRALDE.

Well, for that reason you ought to marry your little Louison, when she is grown-up, to an apothecary.

ARGAN.

Why not?

BÉRALDE.

Heavens! will you always be so bewitched with your doctors and apothecaries? Will you

forever insist on being ill, in spite of friends and nature?

ARGAN.

What do you mean by that, brother?

BÉRALDE.

I mean, brother, that I never saw a man less ill than you; and that I should never wish for myself a better constitution than yours. One great sign that you are well, and that you have a perfectly organized body is, that after all the pains you have taken, you have n't been able to injure the soundness of your constitution, and that you have n't died of the drugs they have made you swallow.

ARGAN.

But, let me tell you, it is those very drugs that have kept me sound. Monsieur Purgon says I should break down entirely if he were three days without prescribing for me.

BÉRALDE.

If you don't look out, he 'll take such care of you that he 'll send you into another world.

ARGAN.

Let us argue that point, brother. Don't you believe in the science of medicine?

BÉRALDE.

No; and I don't think it necessary for any one's health to believe it.

ARGAN.

What! you don't believe in a thing which is practised by all the world, and has been revered throughout the ages?

BÉRALDE.

So far from believing it, I think it, between ourselves, one of the greatest follies of mankind. Looking at the matter as a philosopher, I call it entertaining mummery; and I see nothing more ridiculous than a man who sets himself up to cure other men.

ARGAN.

Why won't you allow, brother, that one man can cure another?

BÉRALDE.

Because, brother, the springs of our machine are mysteries to this day into which men may not pry; nature has drawn so thick a veil before our eyes that we cannot see her.

ARGAN.

According to that, doctors know nothing.

BÉRALDE.

Oh! they know something, brother. They know rhetoric and grammar, and can talk the finest Latin, and give Greek names to all diseases and define and class them. But as for curing them, that 's what they know nothing about.

ARGAN.

But you must allow that doctors know more about it than other people?

BÉRALDE.

They know, brother, what I have told you; which does n't go far toward curing people! The whole excellence of their art consists of pompous fustian, specious babble, — giving you words for reasons, and pledges for effects!

ARGAN.

But really, brother, there are men as wise and able as yourself; and we see that when an illness overtakes them they have recourse to doctors.

BÉRALDE.

A sign of human weakness, not of the value of the doctor's art.

ARGAN.

But doctors believe their art is true, for they make use of it themselves.

BÉRALDE.

Many among them share the popular delusion by which they profit; but others take the profits and abandon the delusions. Your Monsieur Purgon, for example, is of the first: he 's a man all doctor, from his head to his heels,— one who believes in his rules as he does in mathematical demonstrations; he thinks it criminal to question them; he sees nothing obscure in medicine, nothing doubtful, nothing difficult; but with presumptuous prejudice, rigid self-confidence, and brutal common-sense, prescribes his purgatives and venesections right and left without discrimination. One can't reproach him for the ills he does, for he sends us to a better world with simple faith; if he kills us, 't is only what he has already done to wife and children, and what he will do to himself when occasion offers.

ARGAN.

I see that you are bigoted against him. But let us come down to facts. What would you do if you were ill?

BÉRALDE.

Nothing.

ARGAN.

Nothing?

BÉRALDE.

Nothing. All that we need to do is to keep still. Nature herself, if we will let her act, will gently rally from the disorder into which she fell. 'T is our anxiety, our impatient restlessness, that spoils her work. Most men, in short, die of their remedies, and not of their diseases.

ARGAN.

But you must admit that nature can be aided in certain ways.

BÉRALDE.

Oh, heavens, brother! that 's a mere idea with which men please themselves. From time to time some splendid theories glide across the world, in which we all believe because they tickle our vanity. 'T is greatly to be wished, I own, that they were true. But when a doctor talks to you of aiding, succoring, and healing nature; relieving her of ills and giving her the good she lacks; of reviving and restoring the use of her faculties; when he talks, I say, of rectifying the blood, soothing the bowels and

the brain, reducing the spleen, healing the lungs, cleansing the liver, toning the heart, restoring and preserving natural warmth, and declares he has some secret for the prolongation of life, he is simply telling you the romance of medicine. When you come down to truth and to experience you 'll find nothing of all that. Such fancies are like those beautiful dreams which leave naught behind but the vexation of having believed them.

ARGAN.

In short, the whole science and art of the world is confined to your head, and you know more than the greatest doctors of the age.

BÉRALDE.

Your great doctors are widely different persons in profession and in practice. Hear them talk — the ablest of human beings! See them work — the most ignorant of men!

ARGAN.

Yah! you think yourself a fine doctor! I only wish some of those gentlemen had been here to confute your arguments and lower your tone.

BÉRALDE.

I, brother? Why, I don't take upon myself the task of combating the Faculty; each man, at his peril or good luck, can think as he pleases. What I have said is all between ourselves. I should have liked to draw you from the error of your ways, and to have taken you, for your amusement and your edification, to see a comedy on this subject by Molière.

ARGAN.

Your Molière is an impudent fellow with his comedies! I think him very saucy to make game of honest men like our good doctors.

BÉRALDE.

'T is not the men he laughs at, but the absurdities of their doctoring.

ARGAN.

It is n't his business to criticise the science of medicine. He 's a booby, a jackanapes, to laugh at consultations and prescriptions, and to attack the whole Faculty by putting such venerated persons as those gentlemen on the stage.

BÉRALDE.

What should he put on the stage but the divers professions? Princes and kings are put there every day, and their station in life is every whit as good as a doctor's.

ARGAN.

By all the devils! if I were a doctor I 'd revenge his impertinence on himself; and when he falls ill I 'd let him die without help. He might beg and pray, and I would n't prescribe the smallest dose or the least little bleeding. I 'd say to him: "Die, die; and that will teach you to laugh at the Faculty again."

BÉRALDE.

Well! here you are in a downright rage.

ARGAN.

Yes. He 's an ill-advised fellow; and if the doctors are wise they 'll do as I say.

BÉRALDE.

He 'll be wiser than your doctors, for he won't ask their help.

ARGAN.

So much the worse for him.

BÉRALDE.

He has his reasons for not doing so; he maintains that it is only vigorous and robust men who have strength to survive the remedies of their diseases; for himself, he has only strength enough to bear his disease.

ARGAN.

What silly reasoning! Come, brother, don't let us talk about that man again; it stirs my bile and may bring back my malady.

BÉRALDE.

So be it, brother; and, to change the topic, let me say that because your daughter shows repugnance to your wishes you ought not to take the violent resolution of putting her in a convent. In the choice of a husband you surely would not follow blindly the person which now carries you away? You ought on such a point to yield, somewhat at least, to a daughter's inclination, because it is a matter which concerns her whole life, and all the happiness of marriage depends upon it.

SCENE FOURTH

MONSIEUR FLEURANT, *injection-pipe in hand*, ARGAN, BÉRALDE

ARGAN.

Brother, with your permission —

BÉRALDE.

What do you mean? What are you going to do?

ARGAN.

Take my injection; it will soon be over.

BÉRALDE.

You are joking! Can't you live a single hour without drugs and purgatives? Put it off till another time, and give yourself some rest.

ARGAN.

Monsieur Fleurant, to-night if you please, or to-morrow morning.

MONSIEUR FLEURANT, *to Béralde.*

Why do you interfere with the doctor's orders, and hinder monsieur from taking my enema? It is very strange of you, I think, to take such liberty.

BÉRALDE.

'T is very evident, my friend, that you are not accustomed to address a gentleman.

MONSIEUR FLEURANT.

You have no right to trifle thus with remedies and make me lose my time. I came here solely by the doctor's orders, and I shall now inform him how I am hindered in my duty and prevented from administering his prescription; and you will see what you shall see!

SCENE FIFTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

ARGAN.

Ah! brother, you 'll be the cause of some catastrophe.

BÉRALDE.

What catastrophe can there be in not taking an injection ordered by Monsieur Purgon? Once more, brother, I ask you: is it possible that you can't be cured of the disease of doctoring? Do you choose to be buried all your life under their nostrums?

ARGAN.

Good God! brother, you talk like a man who is always well; but if you were in my place you 'd take another tone. It is easy to rail at medicine when you are in high health.

BÉRALDE.

What ails you? come!

ARGAN.

You make me furious. I wish you had my ailments to see if you would gabble in this way then. Ah! here comes Monsieur Purgon.

SCENE SIXTH

MONSIEUR PURGON, ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE

MONSIEUR PURGON.

I have just been told, downstairs at the door, some extraordinary news, — that my prescriptions are slighted, and the remedies which I ordered sent away.

ARGAN.

Monsieur, it was not —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Such audacity is unheard-of! — a strange rebellion indeed of a patient against his doctor.

TOINETTE.

Fearful!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

An enema which I took pains to mix myself,

ARGAN.

It was not I —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Compounded and medicated by all the rules of art,

TOINETTE.

He did wrong!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Calculated to have a marvellous effect on the intestines,

ARGAN.

My brother —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Sent back contemptuously,

ARGAN, *pointing to Béralde.*

It was he who —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

A monstrous action,

TOINETTE.

Monstrous indeed!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

A gross attack upon my profession.

ARGAN, *pointing to Béralde.*

He caused —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

A crime, I may say, of lèze-Faculty, which cannot be too severely punished.

TOINETTE.

True!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

I here declare that I break off all intercourse with you,

ARGAN.

It was my brother who —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

I will have no more to do with you!

TOINETTE.

And quite right, too!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

To end forever our relations, there is the deed of gift I made to my nephew in favor of his marriage. (*Tears up the paper and flings the bits away furiously.*)

ARGAN.

It was my brother who did all this harm.

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Despise my clyster!

ARGAN.

Send it back and I will take it.

MONSIEUR PURGON.

I should have cured you in a week;

TOINETTE.

He does n't deserve it!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

I should have defecated your body, and eliminated every one of its bad humors.

ARGAN.

Oh, brother! brother!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Only a dozen or so of drugs were needed to make another man of you.

TOINETTE.

He is n't worthy of such care!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

But as you do not choose to be cured,

ARGAN.

It was not my fault —

MONSIEUR PURGON.

As you refuse the obedience which every man owes to his doctor,

TOINETTE.

Such conduct cries for vengeance!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

And proclaim yourself a rebel against the remedies I prescribed for you,

ARGAN.

No, no, I don't.

MONSIEUR PURGON.

I here declare that I abandon you to your bad constitution, to the atrophy of your stomach,

to the corruptions of your blood, the acidity of your bile, the purulence of your humors.

TOINETTE.

And serve him right, too.

ARGAN.

Good God!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

Within four days your condition will be incurable.

ARGAN.

Merciful Heaven!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

You will fall into bradypepsia,

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

From bradypepsia into dyspepsia,

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

From dyspepsia into apepsia,

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

From apepsia into lientery,

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

From lientery into dysentery,

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

From dysentery into dropsy,

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon!

MONSIEUR PURGON.

And from dropsy to loss of life, to which your folly has conducted you.

[*Exit.*

SCENE SEVENTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

ARGAN.

Good God! I am dead! Brother, you have killed me.

BÉRALDE.

Why, what's the matter?

ARGAN.

I'm gone; I feel that medicine is already avenging itself.

BÉRALDE.

Upon my word, brother, you are crazy. I would n't, for a good deal, have other persons see you behaving thus. Pull yourself up, I beg of you; recover your senses, and don't give way like this to your imagination.

ARGAN.

But you heard, brother, the strange maladies with which I am threatened.

BÉRALDE.

Oh! what a simple-minded creature you are!

ARGAN.

He says that I shall be incurable within four days!

BÉRALDE.

What does it signify what he says? Is he an oracle? One would really think, to hear you talk, that Monsieur Purgon held the thread of your life in his fingers and that he could, by some divine authority, shorten or lengthen it as he pleased. Reflect that the elements of life are in yourself; and that Monsieur Purgon's anger is as little able to make you die as his remedies are to make you live. Here's an opportunity, if you will take it, to get rid of doctors; or, if you were born unable to do without them, you can easily find another, with whom, brother, you will run less risk.

ARGAN.

Ah! brother, but he knew my constitution, and the way to treat it.

BÉRALDE.

Well, well, one must admit that you are a man of prejudice, and you see things with the strangest eyes.

SCENE EIGHTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE, *to Argan.*

Monsieur, a doctor is here who asks to see you.

ARGAN.

What doctor?

TOINETTE.

A doctor of medicine.

ARGAN.

I asked you who he was.

TOINETTE.

I don't know him; but he 's as like me, myself, as two drops of water. If I did n't know for sure that my mother was an honest woman I should say he was some little brother she had given me after my father's death.

ARGAN.

Let him come in.

SCENE NINTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

BÉRALDE.

You have the luck of it; a doctor leaves you and a doctor comes.

ARGAN.

I greatly fear that you have been the cause of some catastrophe.

BÉRALDE.

What again! Are you harking back to that?

ARGAN.

My heart is burdened with those diseases of which I had never even heard until to-day, those —

SCENE TENTH

ARGAN, BERALDE, TOINETTE, *disguised as a doctor*

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, I beg you to receive my visit and permit me to offer you my little services for all the bleedings and purgations of which you may stand in need.

ARGAN.

Monsieur, I am greatly obliged to you. (*To Béralde*) Upon my word, one would think it was Toinette herself!

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, I must ask you to excuse me for a moment; I have forgotten a direction I had to give my valet. I will return immediately.

SCENE ELEVENTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

ARGAN.

Now would n't you think it really was Toinette?

BÉRALDE.

The likeness is certainly very strong; but it is not the first time I have seen the same sort of thing; and history is full of these tricks of nature.

ARGAN.

Well, I 'm surprised, and —

SCENE TWELFTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE.

Do you want me, monsieur?

ARGAN.

No, why?

TOINETTE.

I thought I heard you call.

ARGAN.

I? no.

TOINETTE.

Then my ears deceived me.

ARGAN.

Here, stop a moment, and see how like this doctor is to you.

TOINETTE.

I can't; I 've a great deal to do below.

SCENE THIRTEENTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

ARGAN.

If I had not seen the two in this way I should really think they were only one.

BÉRALDE.

I have read of astonishing resemblances; and we have known of one in our day which puzzled everybody.

ARGAN.

I might have been deceived by this one, if I had not known better. I could have sworn they were one and the same person.

SCENE FOURTEENTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE, *as a doctor*

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, I beg your pardon with all my heart.

ARGAN, *low to Béralde.*

His manner is excellent.

TOINETTE.

You will not be displeased, I hope, at the curiosity I have felt to see so illustrious a sick man as yourself. Your reputation, which spreads everywhere, must be my excuse for the liberty which I have taken.

ARGAN.

Monsieur, I thank you much.

TOINETTE.

I notice, monsieur, that you are looking at me fixedly. What age do you take me to be?

ARGAN.

I should say that, at the most, you might be twenty-six or twenty-seven.

TOINETTE.

Ha, ha, ha! ha, ha! I am eighty-nine.

ARGAN.

Eighty-nine!

TOINETTE.

Yes. You see the effects of certain secrets of my art, which have kept me fresh and vigorous.

ARGAN.

Faith! you are a fine young fellow for an octogenarian.

TOINETTE.

I am a travelling physician. I go from town to town, province to province, kingdom to kingdom in search of illustrious subjects for my talents; cases worthy to occupy my thoughts; patients able to avail themselves of the great and noble secrets I have discovered in the

science of medicine. I disdain to waste my time on the paltry rubbish of ordinary maladies; trifles like rheumatisms, swellings, feverish attacks, hysterics, headaches. I want diseases of importance; good continued-fevers, with delirium, good spotted fevers, plagues, well-marked dropsies, and sound pleurisies with inflammation of the lungs. They are the kinds of illness that take my mind. I triumph in them; and I wish, monsieur, that you had all the diseases of which I speak and were given over as a hopeless case by every doctor in the land, in short, at death's door, that I might prove to you the virtue of my remedies and the desire that I have to serve you.

ARGAN.

I am deeply obliged, monsieur, for the kindness which you express to me.

TOINETTE.

Let me feel your pulse, monsieur — Come, come, beat properly. Ha! I 'll soon make you go as you should. Heyday! this pulse is a bit saucy; I see you don't know me yet. Who is your doctor?

ARGAN.

Monsieur Purgon.

TOINETTE.

His name is not down on my register among the great physicians. What did he say was the matter with you?

ARGAN.

He said it was the liver, but others say it is the spleen.

TOINETTE.

They are all ignoramuses. The trouble is in the lungs.

ARGAN.

Lungs!

TOINETTE.

Yes. What are your symptoms?

ARGAN.

Sometimes I have pains in my head.

TOINETTE.

Exactly; lungs.

ARGAN.

At other times there 's a sort of veil before my eyes.

TOINETTE.

Lungs.

ARGAN.

And my heart beats.

TOINETTE.

Lungs.

ARGAN.

And I often feel a lassitude in all my limbs.

TOINETTE.

Of course. Lungs.

ARGAN.

And sometimes I have pains in my stomach — like colic.

TOINETTE.

Yes; lungs. Have you an appetite for what you eat?

ARGAN.

Yes, monsieur.

TOINETTE.

Lungs. You enjoy drinking wine?

ARGAN.

Yes, monsieur.

TOINETTE.

Lungs. And you feel an inclination to take a little nap after eating; you are glad to sleep?

ARGAN.

Yes, monsieur.

TOINETTE.

Lungs, lungs, I tell you. What did your doctor order you to eat?

ARGAN.

He ordered soup.

TOINETTE.

Ignorant fellow!

ARGAN.

Chicken.

TOINETTE.

Idiot!

ARGAN.

Veal.

TOINETTE.

Fool!

ARGAN.

Any kind of broth.

TOINETTE.

Ignorant creature!

ARGAN.

Fresh eggs!

TOINETTE.

Ninny!

ARGAN.

At night stewed prunes to start the bowels.

TOINETTE.

Ignoramus!

ARGAN.

And, above all, to drink my wine diluted.

TOINETTE.

Ignorantus, ignoranta, ignorantum! You must drink your wine neat. And to thicken your blood, which is now too thin, you must eat good fat beef, good roast pork, good Dutch cheese, with oat-meal, and rice, and chestnuts, and nice light pastry to mix and conglutinate the whole. Your doctor is a jackass. I shall send you one of my own, and I will come and see you myself, from time to time, as long as I stay in this town.

ARGAN.

You will greatly oblige me.

TOINETTE.

What the devil are you doing with that arm?

ARGAN.

How?

TOINETTE.

That 's an arm I should have taken off immediately if I were you.

ARGAN.

Why?

TOINETTE.

Don't you see that it draws all the nourishment to itself and prevents the arm on the other side from getting any?

ARGAN.

But I want my arm.

TOINETTE.

And there 's a right eye that I should have taken out if I were in your place.

ARGAN.

Put out my eye!

TOINETTE.

Don't you see that it interferes with the other and robs it of proper nutriment? Take my advice and have it put out at once. You 'll see much better with the left eye.

ARGAN.

There 's no haste about it.

TOINETTE.

Well, adieu; I am sorry to leave you so soon, but I must be at a consultation over a man who died yesterday.

ARGAN.

Consultation over a dead man?

TOINETTE.

Yes, to consult and find out what ought to have been done to cure him. Au revoir.

ARGAN.

Patients, you are aware, cannot conduct their visitors to the door.

SCENE FIFTEENTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE

BÉRALDE.

There's a doctor, now, who really does seem to be clever.

ARGAN.

But he 's rather hasty.

BÉRALDE.

All great doctors are.

ARGAN.

Cut off my arm and put out my eye that the others may be better! I 'd much rather they were n't so well. A fine operation, faith! to make me one-eyed and a cripple!

SCENE SIXTEENTH

ARGAN, BÉRALDE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE, *pretending to speak to some one outside.*

Come, come, I don't want this sort of fooling.

ARGAN.

What's all that?

TOINETTE.

Your new doctor, faith! who wants to feel my pulse.

ARGAN.

Now just see that! At eighty-nine years of age!

BÉRALDE.

Brother, inasmuch as your Monsieur Purgon has quarrelled with you, will you now let me speak to you of a match that has been proposed to me for your daughter?

ARGAN.

No, brother. I intend to put her in a nunnery because she opposed my will. I see plainly that there is some love affair under it all; I have discovered a certain secret interview, which they don't know that I have discovered.

BÉRALDE.

Well, brother, suppose there is some little secret inclination, would you call that criminal? Why should you be displeased so long as things lead honestly to marriage?

ARGAN.

However that may be, brother, she is to be a nun; that is a settled thing.

BÉRALDE.

You wish to please another person.

ARGAN.

I know what you mean. You are always harking back to that; my wife sticks in your gullet.

BÉRALDE.

Well, yes, brother; if I must speak openly, it is your wife I mean. I cannot bear your obstinate obedience to her will any more than your blind confidence in doctors; I see you tumbling head-foremost into all the traps she sets for you.

TOINETTE.

Ah! monsieur, don't speak so of madame. She 's a woman of whom no evil can be said; a

woman without deceit, and who loves monsieur — well, I can't tell you how she loves him.

ARGAN, *to Béralde.*

Ask Toinette if she comforts me.

TOINETTE.

Indeed she does.

ARGAN.

And what anxiety she feels at my weak state.

TOINETTE.

Just so.

ARGAN.

And what incessant care she takes of me.

TOINETTE.

There's nothing like it. (*To Béralde*) Do you want me to convince you and show you on the spot how madame loves her husband? (*To Argan*) Monsieur, may I show him his blunder and put him right?

ARGAN.

How?

TOINETTE.

Madame will soon be home. Stretch yourself out, stiffly, in that chair, and pretend that

you are dead. You 'll see the grief she shows when I break the news to her.

ARGAN.

I am willing.

TOINETTE.

Yes, but don't leave her too long in her despair, or she might die of it.

ARGAN.

Trust me for that.

TOINETTE, *to Béralde.*

Hide yourself in that corner, there.

SCENE SEVENTEENTH

ARGAN, TOINETTE

ARGAN.

There is n't any danger, is there, in counterfeiting death?

TOINETTE.

No, no; what danger could there be? Stretch yourself out. (*In a low tone*) There 'll be some pleasure in confounding your brother's prejudice. Here comes madame. Stiffen yourself well.

SCENE EIGHTEENTH

BÉLINE, ARGAN, *stretched out*, TOINETTE

TOINETTE, *pretending not to see Béline.*

Ah! good God! Ah! what sorrow! 'Tis a fatal event!

BÉLINE.

What is the matter, Toinette?

TOINETTE.

Ah! madame —

BÉLINE.

What is it, I ask you?

TOINETTE.

Your husband is dead!

BÉLINE.

My husband dead?

TOINETTE.

Alas! yes; the poor deceased has departed this life.

BÉLINE.

Are you sure?

TOINETTE.

I am sure. No one as yet knows of the event. I was here alone with him; he died

in my arms. See! there he lies in his chair, at full length.

BÉLINE.

Heaven be praised! I am relieved indeed of a heavy burden. How silly of you, Toinette, to be sorry for his death.

TOINETTE.

I thought it might be proper to weep, madame.

BÉLINE.

Yes, yes, but it is not worth while. What loss is he? What good did he do in the world? A man unpleasant to everybody; dirty, disgusting; with an injection or a medicine forever in his stomach; blowing his nose, coughing, spitting; without intelligence, wearisome, cross, fatiguing every one about him, and scolding day and night the maids and valets.

TOINETTE.

That 's a fine funeral oration!

BÉLINE.

Toinette, you must help me to carry out a plan; and if you do, you may rely upon it your reward is certain. As, fortunately, no one yet

knows of this event, let us lay him on the bed and conceal his death until I have done what I want to do. There are papers and money hidden in the room which I must have. It would be most unjust that I should have spent the best years of my life in taking care of him without reward. Come, Toinette; but let us first look for his keys.

ARGAN, *rising suddenly.*

Gently!

BÉLINE.

Aië!

ARGAN.

So, madame, this is how you love me?

TOINETTE.

Ha! ha! the poor deceased is n't dead at all.

ARGAN, *to Béline, who goes out.*

I am very glad to have seen your affection, and to have heard the noble panegyric you pronounced upon me. I take it as a piece of good advice, which will make me wiser for the future, and keep me from doing many things.

SCENE NINETEENTH

BÉRALDE, *coming from his hiding-place,* ARGAN, TOINETTE

BÉRALDE.

Well, brother, now you see!

TOINETTE.

Faith! I could n't have believed it! But, monsieur, I hear your daughter. Get back to where you were, and let us see how she will take your death. 'T is a thing worth proving; and since you are in the way of it, it is as well to know the feelings of your family.

(*Argan stretches himself out, Béralde hides.*)

SCENE TWENTIETH

ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, TOINETTE

TOINETTE, *pretending not to see Angélique.*

Oh, heavens! Oh, fatal loss! Disastrous day!

ANGÉLIQUE.

What is the matter, Toinette, why are you crying?

TOINETTE.

Alas! I have such dreadful news to give you.

ANGÉLIQUE.

What news?

TOINETTE.

Your father is dead.

ANGÉLIQUE.

My father dead, Toinette?

TOINETTE.

Yes, there he lies; he died just now in a sudden faintness.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Oh, Heaven! what a misfortune! what a cruel blow! Alas, must I lose my father, the only parent that was left to me? And to lose him, as an additional misery, at the very moment when he was angry with me! What will become of me, unhappy girl that I am? What comfort can I have for such a sorrow?

SCENE TWENTY-FIRST

ARGAN, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE

CLÉANTE.

What troubles you, my Angélique? why do you weep?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Alas! I weep for the loss of all that was most dear and precious to me in life, — for my father; he is dead.

CLÉANTE.

Oh, heavens! what an event! what an unlooked-for blow! I came here now, after the offer which I implored your uncle to make on my behalf, to speak to your father in person, and strive by my entreaties and my deference to induce his heart to give you to me.

ANGÉLIQUE.

Ah! Cléante, say no more of that. Let us give up these thoughts of marriage. After so great a loss I cannot stay in the world; I must renounce it. Yes, father, though I resisted your wishes once, I now will follow one, at least, of your intentions, and expiate the grief I blame myself for causing you. (*Throwing her-*

self on her knees.) Father, I give you, here, my word, and kiss you as a pledge of my repentance.

ARGAN, *embracing her.*

My daughter!

ANGÉLIQUE.

Aië!

ARGAN.

Come, do not be afraid; I am not dead. Ha! you are blood of my blood, my true daughter; and I am thankful to have seen your native goodness.

SCENE TWENTY-SECOND

ARGAN, BÉRALDE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE

ANGÉLIQUE.

Oh! what joy! Father, since Heaven, to bless me, returns you to my prayers, suffer me to throw myself at your feet with one entreaty: If you will not listen to the yearnings of my heart, if you refuse me Cléante for my husband, do not force me, I conjure you, to take another. That is all I ask.

CLÉANTE.

Ah! monsieur, be touched, I pray you, by her prayers and mine; and do not stand against the mutual ardor of so noble an attachment.

BÉRALDE.

Brother, can you withstand it?

TOINETTE.

Monsieur, are you insensible to such true love?

ARGAN.

Let him become a doctor, and I consent. (*To Cléante*) Yes, monsieur, enter that profession and you shall have my daughter.

CLÉANTE.

Most willingly. If that is all that you require in a son-in-law, I 'll make myself a doctor, or an apothecary, if you like. It is not much to do, and I would do far more to win the hand of my fair Angélique.

BÉRALDE.

Stop, brother; a thought has just occurred to me. Be a doctor yourself. Enter the Faculty. The convenience would be great; you would have in your own person the things you want.

TOINETTE.

That's very true. Here's the right way to cure yourself at once. There's no disease that dares play tricks upon the body of a doctor.

ARGAN.

Brother, I fear that you are jesting. Am I of an age to go to college?

BÉRALDE.

College! pooh! You have learning enough. There are many doctors in the profession not half as skilful as yourself.

ARGAN.

But surely I must know Latin, and know diseases and the ways to cure them?

BÉRALDE.

In receiving the cap and robe of a physician all those things will come to you. After the ceremony of your induction you will be cleverer and more learned than you need to be.

ARGAN.

What! does the wearing of a robe enable doctors to discourse on maladies?

BÉRALDE.

Yes. Talk in a cap and gown, and any balderdash is learning, and nonsense reason.

TOINETTE.

Why, yes, monsieur; in fact, if you had nothing but your beard that would be much; a beard goes far to make a doctor.

CLÉANTE.

In any case, I am at your orders.

BÉRALDE, *to Argan.*

Suppose you apply at once for admittance to the Faculty?

ARGAN.

What, at once?

BÉRALDE.

Yes, here, in your own house.

ARGAN.

In my own house?

BÉRALDE.

Yes. I count a member of the Faculty among my friends. He would convoke his brethren and have the ceremony in this house at once. It will cost you nothing.

ARGAN.

But I — what must I say? how shall I answer?

BÉRALDE.

They will inform you when they arrive here, and give you in writing what you have to say. Go and put on a decent suit of clothes. I will send for the assembly.

ARGAN.

Well, I consent.

SCENE TWENTY-THIRD

BÉRALDE, ANGÉLIQUE, CLÉANTE, TOINETTE

CLÉANTE.

But what do you really mean? Who is this member of the Faculty?

TOINETTE.

Yes, what are you going to do?

BÉRALDE.

Amuse you all to-night. Certain comedians have composed an *extravaganza* on the reception of a candidate into the Medical Faculty, with dances and music. I propose that we all

take part in the performance, and that my brother shall play the part of candidate.

ANGÉLIQUE.

But, uncle, it seems to me that you are rather making game of my father.

BÉRALDE.

No, niece; it is not making game of him to adapt our amusement to his fancies. Besides, it is only among ourselves; we will each take a part and play the little comedy together; this carnival season justifies it. Come, let us be quick, and get things ready.

CLÉANTE, *to Angélique.*

Do you consent?

ANGÉLIQUE.

Yes, since my uncle leads the way.

THE CEREMONY

THIS is the burlesque ceremony of a man being made a doctor with recitative, song, and dance. Several upholsterers prepare the hall and place the seats, keeping time in their movements. After which, the whole assembly, consisting of eight medical students, six apothecaries, twenty-two doctors, the candidate who is now to be admitted to the Faculty, eight surgeons dancing, and two singing, enter the hall and take their places, each according to his rank.

FIRST BALLET

THE PRESIDENT.

Savantissimi doctores,
Medicinæ professores,
Qui hic congregated estis;
Et vos, altri messiores,
Sententiarum Facultatis
Fideles executores,
Surgeons and apothecaries,
Atque tota compagnia also,
Salus, honor, and argentum,
Atque bonum appetitum.

Non possum, docti confrèri,
In me satis admirari
Qualis bona inventio
Est medici professio,
Quam fine a thing it is and ben trovata
Medicina illa benedicta,
Quæ, suo nomine solo,
Surpassingly miraculo,
Since for so longo tempore,
Facit in clover vivere
Many folk omni genere.

Per totam terram videmus
Grandam vogam ubi sumus;
Et quod both great and small, elated,
Sunt de nobis captivated,
Totus mundus currens ad nostra remedies;
Nos regardat sicut deos,
And to our wise prescriptionibus,
Princes and kings submissive videtis.

Wherefore 't is nostræ sapientiæ,
Boni sensus, atque prudentiæ,
To hard-workibus
And preserve us
In such credito, voga, et honore;
And take-caribus to admitibus
In nostro docto corpore
Only personas capabiles,
Et totas dignas remplire
Has plaças honorabiles.

That 's why that nunc convocati estis;
Et credo quod trovabitis
Dignam materiam medici
In learned homine here presenti;

Whom, in theses multifarious,
Dono ad interrogandum,
Probe by deep examinandum
Vostris capacitatibus.

FIRST DOCTOR.

Si mihi licentiam dat dominus præses,
And so many docti doctores,
And satellites illustrious,
And very learned candidate,
Quem estimo et honoro,
Domandabo causam et rationem
Quare opium facit slumberum.

CANDIDATE.

Mihi a docto doctore
Domandatur causam et rationem
Quare opium facit slumberum,
To which respondeo
Quia est in eo
Virtus dormitiva,
Cujus est natura
Sensus to soothum.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere.
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our docto corpore;
Bene, bene respondere.

SECOND DOCTOR.

Proviso quod non displiceat,
Domino præsidi, grave and fat,

Me benigne annuat,
Cum totis doctoribus savantibus,
And assistantibus benevolentibus,
Dicat mihi dominus prætendens,
Reasons à priori good in evidence
Why rhubarba and why senna
Per nos semper be exhibited
Ad purgandem bile from liver?
Si dicit hoc, he will be clever.

CANDIDATE.

A docto doctore mihi, qui sum prætendens,
Domandatur reasons and evidence
Why rhubarba and why senna
Per nos semper be exhibited
Ad purgandem bile from liver.
Respondeo vobis,
Quia est in illis
Virtus purgativa
Cujus est natura
Istas duas biles evacuare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere.
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our docto corpore

THIRD DOCTOR.

Ex responsis, seemeth jam sole clarius
Quod lepidum iste caput candidatus
Non spent he suam vitam ludendo at backgammon,
Nor yet fumans tobacco nicotin;
Sed explicit wherefore furfur macrum et parvum as

Cum phlebotomia et purgatione humorum,
Appellantur by backbitibus idolæ medicorum,
Nec non pontus asinorum?
If, imprimis, grata sit domino præsidi
Our free liberty questionandi
Pariter dominis doctoribus
Atque for all benignis auditoribus.

CANDIDATE.

Quærit a me dominus doctor
Chrysologos id est, gold at core;
Quare parvum lac et furfur macrum,
Phlebotomia et purgatio humorum,
Appellantur by backbitibus idolæ medicorum,
Atque pontus asinorum.
Respondeo quia:
Ista prescriptio non requiritur magna science.
Et ex illis quatuor rebus
Medici faciunt pounds, shillings, and pence.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere;
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

FOURTH DOCTOR.

Cum permissione domini præsidis,
Doctissimæ Facultatis,
And of the entire company
Nostris actis assistantis,
Domandabo tibi, learned candidate,
Quæ est your remedy
(Tam in homine quam in muliere)

Quæ in malady
Called hydropsia,
(In malo caduco, apoplexia, convulsione, et paralysis)
Convenit facere.

CANDIDATE.

Clysterium donare,
Postea bleedare,
Lastly purgare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere:
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

FIFTH DOCTOR.

Si bonum semblatur domino præsidi,
Doctissimæ Facultati,
And this listening company,
Domandabo tibi, candidate erudite
(Returning homeward gravis ægre),
Quæ remedia colicosis, fievrosis,
Maniacis, nefreticis, freneticis,
Melancolicis, demoniacis,
Asthmaticis, likewise pulmonicis,
Catarrhosis, tussicolisis,
Guttosis, atque gallosis.
In apostemasis wounds et ulcerous,
In case of limb displaced or broken,
Convenit facere.

CANDIDATE.

Clysterium donare,
Postea bleedare,
Lastly purgare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere,
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

SIXTH DOCTOR.

Cum bona venia reverendi præsidis,
Filiorum Hippocratis,
Et totius coronæ nos admirantis,
Petam tibi, resolute candidate,
Of Montpellier non indignus alumnus,
Quæ remedia cæcis, surdis, mutis,
Maimed, halt, blind, and omnibus estropiatis,
Corns on pedibus, malum in dentibus, plague and rabies,
Et nimis magna commotione in omni novo sponso
Convenit facere.

CANDIDATE.

Clysterium donare,
Postea bleedare,
Lastly purgare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere;
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

SEVENTH DOCTOR.

Super illas maladias,
Dominus candidatus dixit marvels
But, not to bore the dominum præsidentem
Doctissimam Facultatem,

Et totam honorabilem
And listening societatem,
Tam corporaliter quam mentaliter hoc præsentem
Faciam illi unam questionem : —
Yesterday, maladus unus
Came by chance in meas manus ;
Homo qualitatis, rich as Crœsus,
Habet grandam fievram with paroxysmis,
Grandam dolorem, and headachus,
Cum tribulation spiriti and laxamento ventris,
Insuper malum in his sidus,
Cum granda difficultate
Et pena a respirare.
Please you mihi dicere
Learned candidate,
Quid illi facere.

CANDIDATE.

Clysterium donare,
Postea bleedare,
Lastly purgare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere ;
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

SAME DOCTOR.

But if the malady,
Cum some perversity
(Ponendo medicum a quia),
Won't be sanari,
Quid illi facere?

CANDIDATE.

Clysterium donare,
Postea bleedare,
Lastly purgare,
Re-seignare, re-purgare, re-clysterizare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere;
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

EIGHTH DOCTOR.

Impetro favorabile permission
A domino præside,
Ab electa troop doctorum,
Tam practicantium quam practica avidorum,
Et a curiosa crowd of idlers,
Ingeniose candidate,
Qui non potuit esse thus far silenced,
Faciam tibi unam questionem of importance.
Gentlemen detur nobis audience:
Isto die bene mane,
Paulo before I broke my fast,
There came to me a damigella,
Italiana and most bella,
I thought her an anæmic maiden,
Quæ habebat pallidos colores,
Fievram blancam, say various doctores,
Laboring under hemicrania,
Short-breathed,
(Suffocatiana)
Swollen legs and lassitudiana,
Palpitationes,

And strangulamento matris,
Also nomine vapor hysterique,
Quæ, sicut all maladies ending in *igue*,
Galen is wont to treat with scorn.
Sed contabit in my earibus
That if she was n't dead it was quite marvellous,
Quia in domo sua
Amor parvus erat, and much that was dreadful,
Because her gallant was gone to Allemagne,
To serve Signor Brandeburg in one campaign.
Already many a cheating charlatan,
With doctors, surgeons, and apothecaries,
Had worked in vain to check her maladies
With drugs, and gases and occult remedies
Of Van Helmont and the Alkahest;
May it please you tell me quid superest
Juxta orthodoxos illi facere.

CANDIDATE.

Clysterium donare,
Postea bleedare,
Lastly purgare.

CHORUS.

Bene, bene, bene, bene respondere.
Dignus, dignus he to enter
Into our learned corpore.

SAME DOCTOR.

But if tam grandis lapsus partium naturalium,
Mortaliter obstinatum,
Per clysterium donare,
Bleedare,

And a hundred times purgare,
Non potest sanari, —
Finaliter, quid may be advisable
Illi facere ?

CANDIDATE.

In nomine Hippocrates benedictam cum bono
Lover conjunctionem imperare.

PRESIDENT.

Juras gardere statuta
Per Facultatem præscripta
Cum senso and good judgment ?

CANDIDATE.

Juro.

PRESIDENT.

And to be in omnibus
Consultationibus
Of old opinionibus
Aut good,
Aut badibus ?

CANDIDATE.

Juro.

PRESIDENT.

And never to make use of
Remedies of any kind
Quam those of almæ Facultatis,
Whether or not the patient ill is
Or dies of his diseases ?

CANDIDATE.

Juro.

PRESIDENT.

Ego, cum isto bono pileo
Venerabili et docto
Dono tibi, et concedo
Diplomam, et virtutem, atque licentiam
Medicinam cum methodo faciendi,
To wit:
Clysterizandum,
Bleedingandum,
Purgingandum,
Phlebotomandum,
Febrifugandum,
Cuppingandum,
Emeticandum,
Scarificandum,
Cauterizandum,
Trepannandum, —
Uno verbo, according to meaning, atque impune occidendi
Parisiis and per totam terram;
Rendes, Domine, these gentlemen gratiam!

SECOND BALLET

All the surgeons and the apothecaries make obeisance to the Candidate, keeping time in their movements.

CANDIDATE.

Grandes doctores doctrinæ
Of rhubarba and of sennea
'T would be in me a foolish thingum,

Inepta and ridiculosum,
Si vobis laudes attentarim.
As well attempt to adjungare
Aut soli lucem,
Aut sidera cœlo,
Aut Tartaro ignes,
To Ocean aquas,
Aut veri rosas;
So by one word
Rendam gratias corpori tam docto,
Vobis, vobis debeo.

Plusquam naturæ aut my pater;
Natura et pater meus
Hominem me habent factum;
But you (and this quam plurimum)
Me fecistis medicum.
With honor, favor, et gratia
I would repay all who are here
And lavish thanks before 'em,
To last in secula seculorum.

CHORUS.

Vivat, vivat, vivat, a hundred times vivat!
Novus doctor, qui bene parlat;
A thousand, thousand, thousand years edet et vivat,
To bleed and purge, and purge and bleed, and eat, drink, and grow fat.
Vivat!

THIRD BALLET

All the surgeons and the apothecaries dance to the sound of instruments and voices, with clapping of hands and pounding of the pestles of the apothecaries.

SURGEON.

Ut videat doctas
Suas prescriptiones,
Omnium chirurgorum,
And apothicarum
Impleri tabernas.

CHORUS.

Vivat, vivat, vivat, a hundred times vivat!
Novus doctor, qui bene parlat;
A thousand, thousand, thousand years edet et vivat,
To bleed and purge, and purge and bleed, and eat, drink, and grow fat.
Vivat!

APOTHECARY.

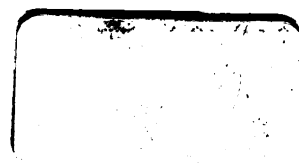
Sint illi omnes
Anni felices,
Et favorabiles
Ut nunquam viderit
Plagues and other villanous epidemics
(Which are curable)
But semper pleuresias, pulmonias,
In renibus et vessia lapillos,
Rheumatismos, calculos, et omnes generis febres,
Fluxus de sanguine, podagras diabolicas,
Mala de Sancto Joanno, Poitevinorum cólicas,
Scorbutum de Hollandis, verolas parvas et grossas
Bonos chancros atque longas callidopissas.

CANDIDATE.

Amen!

CHORUS.

Vivat, vivat, vivat, a hundred times vivat!
Novus doctor, qui bene parlat;
Sint illi omnes
Anni felices,
Habeat rheumatismos, calculos,
Podagras diabolicas,
Pleuresias, pulmonias,
And dysenterias,
Vivat!

END OF LE MALADE IMAGINAIRE.

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